

109. f. 58  
A  
D E F E N C E

O F T H E

*Dissenting Ministry,*

A N D

Presbyterian Ordination ;

Being an

A N S W E R

T O

T W O P A M P H L E T S :

The O N E intitled,

*The Invalidity of the Dissenting Ministry ;*

The O T H E R,

*The Rational and Moral Conduct of  
Mr. P E I R C E examined, &c.*

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By J A M E S P E I R C E.

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*I would — that we might order our diocese in such  
sort, that neither paper, parchment, lead, nor wax,  
but the very christian conversation of the people  
might be the letters and seals of our offices : As the  
Corinthians were to Paul, &c.*

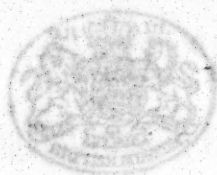
A. B. Cranmer in the App. to his Life, p. 20.

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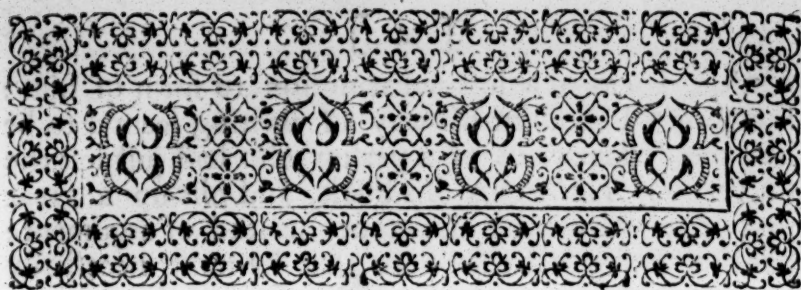
L O N D O N :

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A N  
 A N S W E R  
 TO THE  
 A U T H O R  
 O F  
*The Invalidity of the Dissenting  
 Ministry.*



HEN my sermon intitled,  
*Presbyterial Ordination prov'd  
 regular*, was first publish'd, I  
 was inform'd by a friend  
 there was a design of answer-  
 ing it. But after I had wait-  
 ed a pretty while, I began to  
 suspect his intelligence. I  
 have now read the answer,  
 and must needs say, I am  
 much surpriz'd that they  
 who thought an answer adviseable, should judge  
 that which is publish'd tolerable. The world is not  
 concern'd in laying open the weaknesses of an un-  
 known author, when he says little by way of argu-  
 ment, but what every ordinary reader may see thro'. I

confess, I was at a loss what notion to form of him : sometimes I thought his way of writing seem'd to be like the declamations of a person who had just left the university. He begins his book, and fills up a great part of it with meer harangue, instead of argument : but then I observ'd elsewhere that he must necessarily have left the university long ago, since he has forgot the very terms of disputation, and talks of *the sequel of the major*, in a categorical syllogism. *Impartial View and Conf.* p. 11.

But to give the reader some brief view of his performance : The charge of a great part of the clergies prevaricating with God and man is put off, p. 1. with a *hope they do not with man, and an assurance they can't think it safe to prevaricate with God an omniscient being.* And with the same plausibleness he might have vindicated Mr. Paul and the rest of the rebels, when in arms at *Preston* and *Dumblain*. He denies p. 2. that the gross wickedness of such as pretend to be ministers proves them false prophets, in direct contradiction to our saviour. I said, " those evil fruits are without all " doubt a warrant to the people of *England*, to beware " of a great part of those, who would invalidate all " our ministrations." And here he queries, *why a great part, and not all ?* and could not perceive the obvious reason, that I dont charge all with those fruits. And yet in the same page he tells me, *I dare not say, all that invalidate our ministrations are guilty of those crimes, but leave it cunningly to be apply'd as the reader thinks fit,* and makes this an argument of *my want of candor and sincerity* : whereas my charging a great part is a manifest exception of the rest. He learnedly observes, that the invalidating our ministrations is none of the fruits mention'd by our saviour. Nor did I suggest it was ; but insisted upon such crimes as weré notorious, and omitted what might look like a begging the thing in question. I wish I had been so happy, as to have had an answerer, that took the same course. He represents me as subscribing one doctrine, and teaching the contrary, because he thinks I differ from bishop *Burnet's* exposition of the xxvi article ; and talks as tho' I had subscribed bishop *Burnet*, and not the articles ;  
tho'

tho' if I were guilty of such prevarication, I should have hardly expected a churchman should reproach me with it. So many blunders are there in about a page and an half of his answer. Should I spend many words (as is usual in a reply) upon these, or take notice of all the rest in the other parts of his answer, I should needlessly waste my own time, and unprofitably trespass upon my reader's patience.

He is sometimes witty in retorting my words upon me, inserting comical parentheses to expose them. Thus he tells me, *my way of managing the controversy about ordination has been what they would certainly have chosen, who had design'd to (please not) puzzle the common people rather than inform them. p. 4.* And this is true: I design'd to please them (as the making things easy and plain is the way to do it) and not to puzzle rather than inform them. So that I may well say of him, as Cicero of M. Antony: *Homo disertus non intelligit eum, quem contra dicit, laudari a se.* Philipp. II. c. 8.

He quarrels with my gloss upon 2 Cor. I. 24. *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.* He has from Dr. *Whitby* borrow'd *Theodorit's* exposition, which as the doctor has set it down is plausible; but, out of what humour I know not, he must add a little of his own to make a contradiction of it. He says the apostle in this verse expressly asserts his having dominion; but he did not, as *Theodorit* expounds it, challenge to himself a power to exercise any dominion over them, on the account of their faith. p. 7. And is his not challenging, expressly the asserting a thing? Such ways of speaking often seem to imply a thing, but that is different from an express assertion. And that they dont always somuch as imply a thing, he may see by comparing another place in that epistle, chap. III. 5. I could allege *Chrysostom* against *Theodorit*: his interpretation will not allow so much as his implying that he had dominion. But I value Mr. *Lock* as a commentator above them both, and he explains the apostle as I do.

He represents me as endeavouring to prove the regularity of presbyterian ordination from the text; which I never attempt in opposition to the episcopal,  
but



but only consider it as an objection, which I therefore answer. Compare the *Sermon*, p. 23.

He excuses the extent of the bishop of *London's* diocese by its being a *circumstance*, an *accidental circumstance*, and *not essential*; which are terms of art used that he may seem to answer what he has nothing to say to. Circumstances make the vastest alterations in things. One asks money of me in the street with his hat in his hand; another asks it of me upon the road with a pistol at my breast: these are but circumstances in the asking, but make difference enough. No doubt the circumstance he talks of is not essential to a bishop. 'Tis so far from it, that 'tis destructive of the design of the office: and to name no more, confirmation must be made a jest by this writer, or he can never defend the bishop's having a diocese in such distant parts of the world. Let him try how capable any man can be to do the business of a bishop in such a diocese, by the way in which *Ignatius*, or any writer of the three first centuries, speaks of it. And is it not absurd for him to argue from *Cyprian*, that bishops are all *ejusdem sacerdotii & ordinis*, and therefore the pope may not assume to himself a superiority of power over his colleagues; and yet in the very same page plead for the largeness of a diocese, by *Cyprian's* having the inspection of a province, wherein 'tis certain there were many bishops? I pass many unproved assertions.

His scheme seems yet to be forming, and therefore 'twill be hard for any man but himself to piece it together. He says, p. 10, 11. *The apostolical power, as to its permanent, necessary, and essential branches, was transmitted by the apostles in solidum, as they receiv'd it from our blessed saviour, to single persons in particular sees.* And, p. 9. *There were particular and fixed bounds for a bishop, in which he exercis'd his episcopal jurisdiction, and the affair of ordination, and where there could be but one such bishop at a time.* And yet in the same page he tells us: *The apostles, who were the first bishops of the christian church, exercis'd their episcopal jurisdiction at large, and in common, and each had the whole world for his diocese.* Now how can this be, that but one person can have the episcopal jurisdiction



jurisdiction in a church, and yet twelve more shall have each of them the same episcopal jurisdiction in it at the same time? I wonder what sort of circumstance this is.

I had stated the question very plainly in my *Sermon*, p. 32. But he says, p. 10. of his answer, *it may be more truly stated thus: Whether the apostolical power, as to its permanent, necessary, and essential branches, was not in its nature perpetual and successive; and by them transmitted in solidum, &c.* But if he will take the advice of a person he seems to have some value for, let him hereafter take questions as they are stated to his hand, and not attempt to state them himself, since he has no talent at it. Is it not a wise question, *Whether the apostolical power, as to its permanent branches, was not in its own nature perpetual, i. e. permanent?*

He is very pert in asking me: *But pray who are they that say, that presbyters are the successors of such as were ordain'd by Timothy and Titus? Such prelatists only as Mr. P. and his brethren, who maintain that Timothy and Titus did ordain only presbyters and no bishops.* p. 11. Let us consider the case as to *Titus*. My answerer asserts, *there were particular and fixed bounds for a bishop in which he exercised the affair of ordination.* p. 9. Now these bounds for *Titus* were doubtless the island of *Crete*; and therefore he speaks of *the church of Crete as govern'd by Titus, and left in his possession.* p. 12. *Crete* then was one single church or diocese, which was the bounds of his exercising the affair of ordination: and accordingly he was to ordain them elders in every city. Now not to mention that two sorts are not hinted at; how could *Titus* ordain any bishops according to the episcopal scheme in that one diocese of *Crete*? If he only could be bishop of it, how could he ordain them bishops? Strange jargon!

Nor can I see any difficulty in believing *Timothy* was sent to ordain, where there were presbyters who had the power of ordination. For as he was to be the chief actor in the work, he was to direct them by his example, how they were to perform it afterwards, when he was gone; and indeed he soon was sent elsewhere.

He

He cites a passage from Dr. *Whitby* and Mr. *Dodwell* against those who deny the precedency, p. 14. which I have always asserted, whenever I have had occasion to mention it; as in my *Letters* against Dr. *Wells*, and my *Vindication* against Dr. *Nichols*.

I make evangelists superior to common and ordinary ministers. Their superiority I place not in their being of a different order; for I prove that the apostles themselves were in that respect no more than presbyters; but I consider them as superior in gifts.

This he will not allow. His chief argument is, that *Philip* the deacon is stiled an *evangelist*. But what reason can there be to think, that, tho' he was a deacon at first, he was never advanc'd? Doubtless he *had used the office well*, and therefore according to the apostle's rule, had *purchas'd to himself a good degree*; that is, was "fit (as Dr. *Hammond* explains it) to be "assumed to an higher imployment, that of rulers or "bishops, that greater dignity in the church of God. And as Dr. *Whitby* makes it no less than 26 years after his having been ordain'd deacon, that he is call'd an *evangelist*, let any man judge whether he was not in that time raised higher. I dare say the presbyter of the church of *England*, who is my answerer, would not have been easy to have been kept a tenth part of the time in that office. Besides, there is reason to think he was not any longer a deacon. For if he was, he must be deacon of the church at *Jerusalem*; and consequently, the persecution having ceas'd which drove him thence, he would certainly have been upon the spot discharging his office; whereas when he is call'd an *evangelist*, we find him residing at *Cæsarea*.

His other argument is, That evangelists are left out, 1 Cor. XII. 28. p. 16. Now 'tis a little peculiar to such as assume the power of dictating, to make the same argument to be for or against them, as they please. I argued from their being mention'd, and set before pastors and teachers, *Eph.* IV. 11. But in that place the mentioning of them in that order signifies nothing with him: and yet in the 1 Cor. XII. 28. the not mentioning them at all (which is only a negative argument) must be a clear proof they were not certainly superior to pastors.

Such

Such a positive text as mine is worth a thousand of his negative ones. We don't know what reason the apostle had for leaving them out. I could perhaps guess, but no man can at this distance speak with assurance, since there might be twenty things that might have been a reason for it. And if such a negative argument be of any strength, how will he account for *Timothy's* ordaining persons of three several orders, when the apostle mentions no more than two?

My answerer cavils with me for *imposing upon my hearers with the ambiguity of the word presbyters*, p. 20. which is the most unreasonable thing in the world. For I prove the apostles were such officers as might be more than one in a church, which is the certain notion of presbyters. And tho' he finds so much fault with me, yet he manifestly runs into the crime he charges me with, and plays with the ambiguity of the word *apostles*, as used by the antients. Let any man read the passage I have cited from *Jerom, Vind. F. D. p. 224.* and he will see how loosely they applied this word. I could cite several of the antients who stile *Philip* an *apostle*, and our author will vouch for it that he was but a deacon. See *Constit. App. lib. v. c. 7. & Cotel. not.* And *Gregorius Nyssenus*, would not have any one think that *Stephen*, who certainly was no more than a deacon, was inferior in honor to the apostles. *Encom. in Stephanum*, vol. 3. p. 356. So little stress is to be laid on them; especially when the case is plain in the scriptures.

I alleg'd this proof of our notion? " And certainly  
 " if the apostles themselves were not of such an or-  
 " der, as our modern bishops are pretended to be;  
 " neither could the evangelists be of it. Now had  
 " Christ design'd his apostles should be officers ac-  
 " cording to the episcopal scheme, he ought to  
 " have appointed each of them to preside over some  
 " one church; for 'tis the standing maxim of that  
 " scheme; *There can be but one bishop in one church*:  
 " whereas no less than eleven, to whom presently  
 " after Christ's ascension a twelfth was added, were  
 " at first constituted, and for some time remain'd the  
 " rulers and governours of that church, having all



“ an equal power and authority. So that the apostles were evidently, in their ordinary capacity, presbyters ; that is such kind of officers, as might be more than one in one church.” *Serm. p. 34.* Here the controversy is brought to a short issue, and yet my answerer returns not an answer to any part of the argument, but runs out into a wild discourse quite foreign to the matter in hand. The reader will excuse me, if I put the argument into form, that I may force him, if he would speak to the purpose, to tell what he denies, and what he grants.

Those officers who might be more than one in one single church, were not bishops, but presbyters.

The apostles were officers who might be more than one in one single church.

Therefore the apostles were not bishops, but presbyters.

I use the terms bishops and presbyters according to the episcopal dialect. The *major* in my argument is the standing maxim of their scheme, and so I take it for granted. The *minor* only needs proof, and is thus proved :

Those officers who might be more than one in the church of *Jerusalem*, might be more than one in one single church.

The apostles were officers who might be more than one in the church of *Jerusalem*.

Therefore the apostles were officers, who might be more than one in one single church.

The reason of the *major* is plain ; viz. That the church of *Jerusalem* was one single church. And the reason of the *minor* is as plain ; viz. That there were actually twelve apostles in the church of *Jerusalem*. And this being the first christian church, and constituted immediately by our lord himself, is certainly the best model and pattern.

This brings the controversy into a narrow compass, and will prevent abundance of vain jangling. I have not mention'd this so much for the sake of my answerer, who, I see, has nothing to say to it ; as for other learned men of the party, from whom I should be glad if he would procure me an answer to the purpose



pose. I have turn'd it in my own thoughts often, and have set my self to devise what reply could be made to it; and must profess I always found my self as much at a loss for any as this writer is. I am mistaken, if some of *Euclid's* propositions are more clearly demonstrated.

I think my reasons are as strong at least against *Timothy's* being at *Ephesus*, when the *second Epistle* was writ to him, as any can be alleg'd for it. That *Onesiphorus* was an *Ephesian* is not prov'd; or that *Priscilla* and *Aquila*, tho' they staid some time at *Ephesus*, after they were driven from *Rome*, fixed their residence there, is but a probability, and so must be weigh'd with probable evidences on the other side.

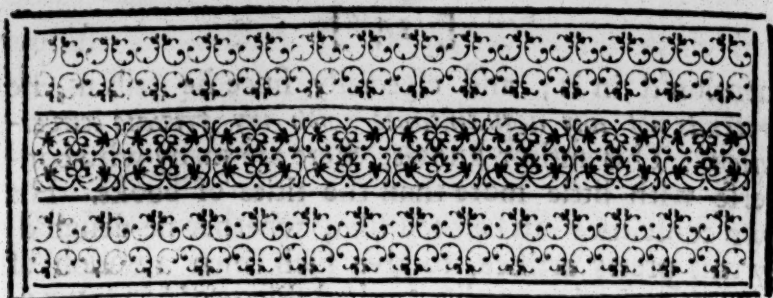
I said, " I never find in the whole *New Testament* " any ordination which was perform'd by a single " person. He alleges the ordination of *Titus*, which is not mention'd there. *Paul* calls him *his son*, and so he does *Timothy*, and therefore the ordination of the latter may determine the nature of the former. 'Tis not certain the apostle had a hand in *Timothy's* ordination; because 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. he may speak of giving the Holy Ghost, which was never done by any but the apostles, except *Ananias* by a special immediate commission: and the Holy Ghost was sometimes given before ordination, as appears by the seven deacons. And tho this writer says, *St. Paul had the only hand in his ordination*; he is forc'd afterwards to abate of his confidence. *Impart. View.* p. 13. For after he has, to solve a difficulty and secure episcopacy, wrested the apostle's words, he pleads that *the presbytery*, if it relates to officers, must signify apostles or bishops. But I dont wonder that he will treat a particular text as he do's, since for the same reason he sinks the reputation of the very canon of scripture. See p. 3. I have observed other instances of such a conduct in men of that party.

I cited *Matth.* xvi. 19. *And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever THOU shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever THOU shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven;* to shew that such things as belong'd to se-

- veral in common, were sometimes spoken of as peculiarly belonging to one; and that therefore the directions given to *Timothy* and *Titus* will not prove they were to act alone; and that 'tis as consistent they were to have others join with them, as 'twas that *Peter* was to have others join'd with him in receiving the keys, and the power of binding and loosing. This is easy and plain; but he do's not say a word to weaken the force of my reasoning. For as to his observations, that *Peter* was the only person to whom our lord could say, *Thou art Peter*, and that the rest were not sons of *Jona*; however learned they may seem, they are nothing to our present purpose.

There is nothing else that a common reader will not be able easily to see thro'. And indeed I dont apprehend that so much of an answer as I have given was very necessary. The gentleman betrays his genius by applauding a writer, whom the most sensible of his own party contemn, who indeed has disgrac'd every controversy he has pretended to write in, and who I will be now free to say did not understand our controversy; wherein I give the late bishop of *Sarum*'s judgment, who declar'd it to one of his own clergy, from whom I had it. And if this writer has such an apprehension, let him try how he can answer the *parallel* in my *Eighth Letter*; or since I have always writ upon the same scheme, let him try to pick out of that gentleman's writings an answer to the demonstration I have now given of my opinion. Tho by the way, he must think of writing more pertinently and consistently, if he expects I should hereafter take notice of him.





A N  
A N S W E R  
T O T H E  
P A M P H L E T  
I N T I T L E D,

*The Rational and Moral Conduct of Mr. PEIRCE  
examined, in Remarks upon his Sermon, &c.*



THE answer to my *Sermon* which I have already consider'd, was not thought likely to do much harm; and therefore the reply to it, which was finish'd in *January*, has lain by, waiting to appear with somewhat else. I cannot wonder our adversaries did not think such an answer sufficient, and have therefore oblig'd the world with another. That which I design now to reply to, is intitled: *The Rational and Moral Conduct of Mr. Pierce examined, in Remarks upon his Sermon, &c.* Which is such a conceited title, as would have prevented my reading the book, had any name but my own been men-



mention'd in it ; and especially since he tells us, he *pretends not any acquaintance with my private conversation*. This author knows, there are many who converse with little more than the titles of books. His own conscience can best tell him, whether he design'd, by this pretty artifice, to give such men a notion of some grievous immorality he had discover'd in my private conversation. If he did ; it was his unhappiness, he did not see the beam in his own eye, when he was so very careful to pull the mote out of mine. What judgment is to be form'd of his own, as well as my *rational and moral conduct*, must be left to the reader, when he has consider'd what is said on both sides.

In the beginning of his *preface* he gives the reasons why his worthy friends put him upon writing. *They*, says he, *with many others, had observed a great forwardness in dissenters of late, not only to vindicate themselves by the press, but to cast unworthy reflections on the church and her clergy ; to write with an air of grandeur, as if this were their day, and yet to stoop to such mean and disingenuous arts, as if they were conscious, that their cause is not to be carried on by fair and candid proceedings.*

There can be no just cause of offence in the dissenters vindicating themselves by the press, or in the making such just reflections on the church and her clergy, as their own vindication fairly leads them to. False and undeserved reflections are not to be justified : but if we clear our selves of all such, no one will blame us for the other. I hope none of us are imprudent enough to suggest, that all the clergy deserve to have as severe reflections made on them, as 'tis notorious many of them do at this day. And when their behaviour is so vile, 'twould be indiscretion, with a witness, should we load them with any reflections which they have not deserved.

*The air of grandeur* he is pleased to object to us, is what I suppose he reckons his own party have a peculiar right to. There are not any men, who write with a more haughty, positive, and imperious air, than they ordinarily do ; nor can they condescend to reason with us, without assuming to themselves an authority to admonish



monish and censure us, altho they cannot easily bear the return of such treatment. When we see more reason to believe they have the truth peculiarly in their possession, and that they have a right to prescribe to their neighbours, somewhat more of deference may be paid them. At present we have as much right to declare what we are persuaded is truth, as they. And I dare say this air of grandeur we are charged with, do's not discover it self in pretending to dictate to men, or to run them down with positive and bold assertions, for which we produce not our reasons. We write like men who are fully satisfied of the justice both of our cause and behaviour, and who are convinced our adversaries cannot acquit themselves as to either. And if we must defer writing, till we can hit upon a way that will please our adversaries, we are sure we shall never write at all. If we write in the most mild and moderate terms; that is improved against us, as tho we were quarrelling with them for matters, about which we were in doubt ourselves: and if we speak out plain truth; then we are accused of writing with *an air of grandeur, as if this were our day*: tho we reckon this our day no otherwise, than 'tis every honest Briton's; a day wherein we have liberty to speak for ourselves, and wherein we are satisfied the government is not carrying on the clergy's designs against us.

Nor do I know of any *mean and disingenuous arts we stoop to*. I am satisfied we neither attempt to rob them of the right they have to educate their children in their own way, nor stir up mobs to rob their houses or temples. And I wish his own party, and among them he himself, as much scorn'd mean and disingenuous arts in writing, as I do. But this, and many other suggestions in his *preface*, and thro his book, are instances of a mean and disingenuous way of writing, design'd to delude poor unthinking people: and so particularly is what follows:

*And indeed, whatever hath induced to, or encourag'd in, such an unpeaceable course; the fact is but too plain in the generality of their books and pamphlets, that they choose rather to provoke and exasperate by contumelious,*  
and

*and even contemptuous treatment, than to invite us by a modest and christian-like behaviour to a calm and serious debate of the points in controversy with them; as if they had ends best to be served by keeping up and promoting heats and animosities.*

This paragraph is well enough calculated to deceive the unwary. Who would not think, if he believ'd our author, that the dissenters are the aggressors, and the most ill natur'd provoking people in the world; that they delighted in heats and animosities, and had some by ends to serve by them; and that the clergy are the most meek and harmless doves, that never did or can give any provocation? Good sir, what ends can you suppose we have to serve by heats and animosities? Have we the interest of any popish pretender at heart, which is certainly served by these things? Are we instilling into people such principles, as should put them upon rising up in a rebellion against his majesty king **GEORGE**? Have we not suffer'd enough by those heats and animosities, which have been in the nation, tho we had not the least hand in raising them? And is it likely we should be fond of what we have already suffer'd so much by? And has this author never heard of any provocation offer'd to us? He must be a great stranger to what was lately done in the place where his pamphlet was printed, and in many other parts of the nation, if he do's not know, that the actions of his party have been a thousand times more severe, than 'tis possible for our words to be. And since the clergy have, many of them, been at the bottom of all the barbarous usage we have met with, they have little reason to reproach us for speaking of them as we have done. The only danger the nation is in, arises chiefly from them; and the exposing them as they deserve, is an eminent service to the public, and very consistent with moderation and peaceableness.

I refer it to the reader to judge of what he says concerning the other writer, of whose answer to my *Sermon* I have already given a taste. Nor shall I meddle with the reason he had for writing and publishing his *Remarks*. I am only concern'd to examine what strength there is in them. I shall likewise pass over what he  
says

says in his solemn and pedantic way concerning myself. If I vindicate myself in particulars, no one will regard such general charges of a *breach of the duties of charity and veracity*.

From his *preface* I proceed to his *first chapter*. And here he begins with a criticism upon my words, which were these, *pref. to the 2d. Sermon. p. 4.* "Every one knows what a mighty stir our adversaries have made about ordination, confining the ministry to those who have a prelate's hand laid upon them, whatever the spirit is which rules in their hearts." This, he says, *p. 1. is to him at least unintelligible*; and insists upon it, that I should either have omitted the last clause [whatever the spirit, &c.] or have said [allowing the ministry to all those] instead of [confining the ministry to those.] Now allowing the ministry to such persons is imply'd in the confining it to them. And the evil I speak of in confining it to them, is greater than a bare allowing it to them.

The confining it to them, expresses that they are reckon'd the only ministers, let whatever spirit rule in their hearts: that is, let them in any place be ever so vicious and profligate, yet no body else must be esteem'd a minister of Christ, on whose ministrations men may lawfully attend. And I hope my words are now intelligible, however unaccountable the thing itself appears to be.

Nor is the passage design'd to incourage the judging mens hearts, any farther than they discover them in the course of their lives; as he may easily perceive by what I say, *An useful ministry &c. p. 24.* I think the words of the xxvi article, which he cites, are very good; but the question is, whether the people are to own and hearken to vicious and profligate men as the ministers of Christ, when the discipline the article speaks of, is notoriously neglected.

I said in the next words: "Their way of managing the controversy about ordination, has been what they would certainly have chosen, if they had design'd to puzzle the common people, rather than inform them."



In answer hereto, he says, p. 2. *The way we take is indeed the nearest and surest we can find to the discovery of the truth.* Whether it be so or not, we shall have a fairer opportunity of debating hereafter. Let us therefore hear the reason he next gives why they take the way they do. *We choose it not,* says he, *but because the circumstances of the case oblige us to it.* This I take to be ingenuous, and an owning they would not have such recourse to fathers and councils, were they not constrain'd to it from the insufficiency of any scripture proof, which they can bring for their opinion. It seems by this passage, that there is somewhat which must be maintain'd for certain reasons as truth; and since it cannot be done by scripture, some other way must be found out to do it. Whether I have help'd the common people to any as near and safe way, we are to debate presently.

He questions not what I next add, that "I was willing to let our people see, they have no need to trouble themselves about what they bring from fathers and councils; and that there is a shorter way of trying the pretences of episcopal and dissenting ministers." He says: *'Tis prudently done, no doubt, to keep their people from regarding what we bring from fathers and councils.* I think 'tis really so: and 'twould not be less prudent in them to do the like. But he adds: *It were dangerous to let them have an esteem of the significance of what is to be found in them.* 'Tis indeed dangerous for them, as 'tis for others, to have an undue esteem of the significance of what is to be found in them. We care not how much they esteem them, provided they acknowledge they are of no significance at all to recommend such things to christians, as are nowhere recommended in their *Bibles*. We are not destitute of testimonies from them; but still the *Bible* is our only rule. And really I can't see but that the church of *England* has as little reason, as we, to magnify the authority of fathers and councils. There are many more things among them disagreeing with fathers and councils, than can be found among us. And supposing I were to judge by them as a rule, what communion I would be of, I must immediately see 'tis impossible



possible I should by their direction chuse the episcopal communion in *England*. Let the trial be made by the *Apostolical Canons*, which bishop *Beveridge* endeavours to prove to be the most ancient orders of the christian church. There is not a bishop of the church of *England* but must be deposed, according to *can. xxxi*, because he is made bishop by the interest of the rulers of this world; and by the same *canon* all that communicate with such are to be suspended. And many other *canons* are there in the same collection, which must necessarily determin a man against that communion, if he resolves to make them his rule. And to help our author in judging what service this procedure can do the church of *England*, I will desire him to consider what effect it had upon the learned Dr. *Grabe*, who was ordain'd in the church of *England*, and no favourer of the dissenters; and yet, out of a deference to fathers and councils, was led into such a dislike of the service of the church of *England*, upon the account of one defect (as he thought) in her administration of the lord's supper, that he is said never to have communicated with her in that service. I question whether there be any church in the world, that observes all those rules upon which the antients vehemently insisted; and therefore none can have reason to be offended, that I reject them as the rule of my faith or practice.

He will now briefly examine what my shorter way of success will come to, which is the way I spake of for trying the pretences of episcopal and dissenting ministers. I shall here give a brief account of that *Sermon*, which will obviate whatever he has said with relation to the design of it, and may save me some trouble hereafter.

When I was to preach upon the occasion mention'd in the title page of the *Sermon*, there were great heats in the nation, and particularly where I was to preach, about the validity of our baptisms, and all our ministrations. I observed that the ministry of the dissenters in general was expos'd as a nullity, and I thought it pertinent upon that occasion to defend it, and chose that argument, apprehending it tended very much to dispose

people to charity. I saw men were fallen into very different notions about the conveyance of the ministerial office, and that they were on all sides tenacious of their several opinions. About the business of ordination I found they could wrangle endlessly, without convincing one another. I was resolved therefore to try, whether, waving the whole business of ordination, an argument might not be used, which was less perplexed, and more level to the lowest capacity, and at the same time might dispose people to charity. Nor was it my design only to promote charity in the episcoparians toward the dissenters; but also in the dissenters toward virtuous and pious episcopal ministers, as may be seen, *p.* 35, 36. And however some are displeas'd, yet I see no cause as yet to repent the design or management of the argument. It met with a greater approbation among the low-church men, than I could have expected any thing of mine should do; and particularly the late bishop Burnet spoke of it, and recommended it, in terms which I cannot with decency relate.

To return now to our author: he asks, *What pretences of episcopal and dissenting ministers this is the way of trying? Not,* says he, *their pretences to regularity, or their being regular ministers.* I grant it, nor was the *Sermon* in the least design'd to shew when a ministry is regular. He attempts now to prove my short way is too short. *For certainly* (says he, *p.* 3.) *people are bound to have a regard to regularity in their choice of a ministry, and never to acquiesce under one which they have cause to doubt is irregular.*

The regularity and irregularity of a ministry, which we now talk of, relates wholly to the entrance of persons upon the ministry, that is, to their ordination. About the main and most essential thing in an ordination the episcoparians and dissenters are agreed: That 'tis a solemn separation of persons to a sacred office, and that this is to be done with prayer, and by persons who have authority for it. What we differ about lies in two things: Who have authority to convey the office; and whether 'tis to be done with imposition of hands. The notion of some is: That the authority is in the body

body of the people. Now this notion, however it displeases me, and therefore has been earnestly opposed by me, do's not with me much affect the regularity of an ordination. For tho' I hold this authority belongs to ministers ; yet the ordinations of those of the contrary notion, being perform'd by ministers, takes off the objection against them. Suppose a bishop of the church of *England* should declare he ordain'd not as a bishop, but as a presbyter : would this affect the regularity, or validity of the ordination ? So in like manner, if ministers in ordaining think they act in the name of the people, this will not with me nullify their act. The only irregularity then that remains, which will affect the ordination, is the omission of imposition of hands. Now, tho' I grant this to be an irregularity ; yet I don't think it such an one as renders a ministry invalid. For it lies not in the essence, but only in a circumstance and ceremony of the ordination. I can't but count this an irregularity, because 'tis disagreeable to scripture practice, and the rule which is fairly imply'd in the direction given to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. v. 22. *Lay hands suddenly on no man.* But when I see good and honest men understand these things quite otherwise than I do, when I see they look upon the laying on of hands to have been used in the scripture times only for the conveying extraordinary gifts, and therefore make a difficulty of using it ; tho' I think they are in the wrong, yet I will not nullify their ministry merely for the want of such a circumstance. And now as to what he says, I grant people are bound to have a regard to regularity in the choice of a ministry ; and so doubtless every one has according to his notion of regularity, and will when all other circumstances are equal, prefer the minister he thinks regular : yet that they may never without necessity acquiesce under one which they have cause to doubt is irregular, is what I am not free to grant ; and were my lot cast where a minister was ordain'd without imposition of hands (tho' such by the way are very few) I should make no scruple of joining with him. Such a ministry, if attended with that evidence my *Sermon* goes upon, of Christ's being with them, would,



would, with all its irregularity, be prefer'd by me to the pretended regularity of such men as are apparently unfit for the office. And the reason why I think I may hold communion with any such is, because I perceive good evidence of the validity of their ministrations. And if Christ shews he counts them valid; who am I, that I should go about to annul them, or refuse to hold a christian communion with them? And yet, as I hinted before, my more stated communion should be with those, whose ordinations were in my judgment perfectly regular, supposing all other circumstances were alike. Nor do's it hence follow, that *regularity in this matter is but an empty name*; or that it *was not worth my while to trouble the world, or myself about the requisites of it*. If it be order'd, it ought to be taken care of, and I did well to plead for it; tho' at the same time I did not think, persons being otherwise minded in this particular circumstance, should make us look upon them as not fit for us to hold communion with. And I am mistaken, if I have not met with some of the episcopal side, who have not disliked this way of reasoning, when it has been for their turn. I mean such who have argued with the antipedobaptists, that they might keep their own notions concerning infant baptism, and the necessity of immersion, and yet not break communion with the Church. If they retain their notion, they must look upon the ordination of an unbaptized person as a great irregularity. How then are they urged to chuse such a ministry, if an apprehended irregularity makes it unlawful for persons to *acquiesce* under a ministry?

I further said in my *preface*: "I am the better pleased with what I have suggested to our people; because I have only followed the example of our blessed saviour, who has directed his followers to discover false teachers by their fruits, without mentioning any thing of their mission: ---and therefore I wav'd the whole business of ordination". Here he asks: *Who can understand any other by this, than that his intention was to teach men to judge of, and consequently to choose a ministry, without any regard to ordination, or therefore to regularity.*

'Tis true, I recommended it as a sufficient rule, by which we may judge whether a ministry be valid, and consequently such as we may safely attend; and I think our saviour do's the same. Do I then count the regularity of the mission a trifle? By no means; nor can my omission any more infer my counting it such, than our lord's omission can infer his doing so. And this rule is the rather to be here apply'd, because the contests about the business of ordination have made that an intricate matter. And since our lord unquestionably foresaw the strife there would be about the name of episcopacy, which *Clemens R. epist. i. c. 44.* tells us, the apostles were inform'd of from Christ: why may he not be thought to design here to give a shorter rule for men to judge by?

I see therefore no cause hitherto to retract any thing I have said, and so I proceed to consider what he says to my defending myself by Christ's example, *Matthew vii. 15, &c.*

Now here our author says, *p. 6. The question is, what we are to understand by false prophets, and what by their fruits.* He says, *I interpret false prophets by false teachers without any scruple; but for no other reason, that he can see, than because it makes best for my purpose.* If I had been peculiar in this interpretation, his suggestion would have appear'd with much more decency. But if the only reason why I so interpreted *false prophets* was, that it best suited my purpose; he will oblige me, by acquainting me what reason *Dr. Hammond* had for giving the same. Thus he expresses the sense in his *paraphrase*: "*Take heed of false teachers.*" And *Dr. Whitby* pleads for this interpretation in his *notes* on the place. See also what he says on *Tit. iii. ii.* And *Grotius*, with several others, mention'd in the *Synopsis*, agree with him. And the writer of the other answer to my *Sermon*, whom this author so much commends, tells me (*Invalid. p. 17.*) that "to improve the doctrines of christianity to edification, exhortation and comfort, was the work of a prophet in the gospel sense, *1 Cor. xiii. 14.*" And if they who did this were *true prophets*, in a gospel sense; 'tis but natural to suppose that they who pretended to it, and did

did not do it, were *false prophets* in a gospel sense. And if the apostle calls an heathen poet a *prophet*, *Tit. i. 12*. I think we need not wonder if this title is to be understood, as given by our lord to ordinary teachers. See *Dr. Hammond* on *Tit. i. 12*. and *Luke i. 67*.

But let us hear our author's reasons for rejecting this interpretation. For false prophets (says he, *p. 7.*) in the sense which is most proper in the general, and most suitable to the place in particular; are such as falsely pretend to a special and extraordinary mission from God: whereas false teachers are either such as falsely pretend a mission from God, whether ordinary or extraordinary, or rather such as teach false doctrine.

That prophets are sometimes meant of such as had an extraordinary mission, I grant; that this sense suits this particular place, I deny. For our saviour do's not speak of such false prophets as rose among the Jews soon after he left the world, and pretended to a special and extraordinary mission, whom he mentions elsewhere, *Matth. xxiv. 24*. This is evident from the account he here gives of them. They are such as profess a respect to him, and call him *lord, lord*, *v. 21*. which those pretended extraordinary prophets did not. They were such as would be able to plead they had *prophefied* in Christ's name, *v. 22*. Now these things will not suit those pretenders among the Jews.

And since it may be doubted, whether there were any that came, at least soon after Christ's time, and in his name falsely pretended to be prophets by an extraordinary mission; it seems most reasonable to me, to suppose Christ speaks of those who only pretended an ordinary mission. Besides, the seducers he means must certainly be such as were to arise in the christian church; and therefore we may well think they are the same, which *St. Peter* speaks of under the name of *false teachers*; and that he designs to let those he wrote to know, that the seducers who were coming among them, would be *false teachers*, and not *false prophets* strictly speaking. But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, *2 Pet. ii. 1*.



He go's on thus: *And that may be a good way to detect false prophets, properly so call'd, which is not of equal use for detecting other false teachers.* I suppose he means the failure of their predictions; if so, what he says is true, but nothing to our purpose. *And this is applicable to the way of detecting them by their fruits, as Mr. P. seems to understand them of their immoral practices.* What then, is the way of detecting false prophets by their immoral practices, only applicable to false prophets, properly so call'd; and not to false teachers? What reason can there be for that? I confess the passage is so obscure, that I am not certain I take his meaning right, and therefore say no more about it. *But by their fruits (as he go's on) I conceive we are to understand their fruits as prophets, i. e. chiefly at least their evil teachings or preachings; and not their wicked lives; because they are supposed to come in sheeps cloathing, which is not consistent with such open wickedness of life, as would manifestly detect them.* Now here I desire the reader to observe:

1. That he supposes *open wickedness of life would manifestly detect* these false prophets; I suppose he means to be false prophets, for that is the detection he is speaking of before. This would be enough to justify me in applying the text as far as I have done to the clergy, provided 'tis meant of false teachers.

2. His argument is of no force, if by *sheeps cloathing* we understand *sheep-skins*, as *Hammond*, *Grotius*, *Whitby*, *Lightfoot*, and others explain it. For then this relates not to an affected sanctity of life, but to an imitation of the old prophets in their dress.

3. Supposing he is not mistaken in his notion of sheeps cloathing, and that it relates to hypocrisy and dissimulation; yet, as *Dr. Whitby* answers, "things feigned and dissembled only, will in a little time be easily discerned, from that which is sincere and real, &c.

4. Let the reader judge by the context which interpretation of these fruits is most natural. Our saviour cautions people against false prophets, *v. 15.* tells them *v. 16. Ye shall know them by their fruits.* And thus he goes on to argue agreeably to the metaphor he had

used : *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* v. 17. *Even so* [Dr. Whitby adds in his paraphrase : " It is not to be expected, that ye should receive good " from such persons.] *Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree evil fruit,* v. 18. *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit : neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit,* v. 19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.* Now what can the fruit in this last place signify but the fruit of holiness? And is it not reasonable to suppose he means the same fruit in repeating his assertion in the next words, v. 20. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them?* The doctor's paraphrase brings our lord's words more home to my argument, than my own; and v. 19. should be then paraphras'd to this purpose : " And since their fruit is such as " bespeaks them the heirs of hell, you cannot expect " any advantage by them, or any thing but their " doom, if you follow them. But I will not insist upon this. Our lord in the next verse evidently confirms my interpretation, v. 21. *Not every one that saith unto me, lord, lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my father, which is in heaven.* This doing the will of God is the good fruit, and stands in opposition to the evil fruit Christ speaks of. And so in the two next verses he shews what the evil fruit was, for which he would condemn these false prophets at last, that it was *the working iniquity.* v. 22. *Many, says he, will say to me in that day, lord, lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?* v. 23. *And then will I profess to them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Perhaps some may think these two last verses determine it that our saviour speaks of persons pretending to an extraordinary mission. But we must remember that our lord used such a way of speaking on other occasions, making his supposition to run very high, on purpose the more to affect his hearers with the vanity of their ungrounded hopes. So he represents the foolish virgins, as coming to the gate of heaven, and seeking admission. The design of which

is not to teach us, that any actually shall do so; but that if it could be supposed they should, they would yet be rejected. And so in like manner are we to understand him here. Besides if these persons be judg'd according to their plea, we must suppose their plea at last would be grounded upon a real, and not a falsely pretended extraordinary mission. And so this would yet more confirm my notion. For if Christ reckons such as had really receiv'd an extraordinary mission, to be false prophets, if they are workers of iniquity; he will much more count all those false prophets, who are of the same character, and can yet pretend to no more than an ordinary mission.

I think I need not set down our author's paraphrase upon Christ's words, since I have overthrown the grounds of it. Nor do's it signify to allege other cautions concerning false prophets. No doubt he is a false prophet, who prophesies any thing contrary to the will of God; but that do's not hinder our saviour's giving another rule to try them by. I conclude therefore with Dr. *Whitby's* note upon the place: "Moreover, it must be noted that Christ here speaks  
" to the multitude, *v.* 28, 29. and to the ears of the  
" people, *Luke vii.* 1. they therefore must beware of  
" them, and so be able to know them by their works,  
" as *the tree is known by its fruits*, *v.* 20. from the  
" works of iniquity they do, *v.* 23. not from their  
" doctrines; for that would render our lord's words  
" ridiculous, *viz.* "Beware of teachers of false doc-  
" trines, by their false doctrines ye shall know  
" them."

He seems to have some doubt of his own interpretation of our saviour's words, however he is positive mine can't be true. *But whether, says he, I have rightly stated our saviour's meaning or not, it cannot be that false teachers, as that may signify false pretenders to an ordinary mission from God, or, as it may signify teachers of false doctrine, are to be known by their wicked practices. For, besides that the false prophets here spoken of, are supposed to come in sheeps cloathing (as was noted before) our saviour allows, that true teachers, and teachers not to be rejected or forsaken, may yet be ill*  
D 2
livers,



- *livers, saying, Matth. xxiii, 2, 3. The scribes and the pharisees sit in Moses seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not: which is a plain intimation, that regularly appointed teachers are not presently to be disregarded on account of their unconfutable practices.*

Now here I desire the reader to observe the nature of this rational gentleman's argument. Christ, when he says beware of false prophets, for by their fruits ye shall know them, can't be understood to require us to reject or forsake false teachers to be known by their wicked practices; because he commands his disciples not to reject or forsake the scribes and pharisees, whose practices were wicked. Now I earnestly desire him to inform me, how this can consist with what our saviour says elsewhere concerning these same pharisees, *Matth. xvi. 6. Take heed and beware of the leaven of the pharisees.* And this leaven is afterwards interpreted to be the doctrine of the pharisees, v. 12. And the same word *πρωτότης* is used here, and *Matth. vii. 15.* If then to beware in one place must signify, as our author explains it, *rejecting or forsaking*, I would fain know why it should not in the other? And in the place I have now alleg'd, 'tis plain if they were to reject or forsake any thing of the pharisees, it was their doctrine. The question now is, how this caution of our lord is consistent with the other text which our author has produced: and an account of that is very easy. The scribes and pharisees are often reproved by Christ, for corrupting the law of God by their traditions. He therefore, *Matth. xvi.* cautions his disciples against them. But yet as they sat in *Moses's* chair (*i. e.* if I understand the expression, were expounders of the law of *Moses*) Christ would not have them reject all they said, meerly because they said it. The leaven of their doctrine he would have them reject: but what they said from the law of *Moses*, all the just interpretations they gave of the precepts of the law, he would have them comply with. And the same is applicable to other false teachers, whether they have, or have not had a regular mission. Whatever they recommend fairly

fairly from the law of God we are to receive, not because of their recommendation, but because of the law of God. And our author will do well to shew, how upon any other scheme than this our saviour could justify his disciples, in not complying with what the scribes and pharisees requir'd, the observing that indifferent ceremony of washing their hands before meat, *Matth. xv. 1, &c.* If our author were not so severe upon my *moral conduct*, I should be apt to suggest to him my suspicion, that he would not argue after this rate, unless he was very conscious, that his party needed such a defence.

Next he will consider whether I have only follow'd our saviour's example. *Our saviour* (says he, p. 8.) *directs men to discover false prophets* (i. e. false pretenders to an extraordinary divine mission) by what they speak and act as prophets, or (say it were) by their moral behaviour. And Mr. P. teaches to judge of (I know not what) pretences, not of prophets, but of ordinary ministers, not by what they speak or do as ministers, or by their moral behaviour, but by their success in converting and edifying their hearers. This surely is very different from only following our saviour's example. Let but Christ's words be interpreted as I have shown they ought, and I think I have follow'd his example in two things: first, in waving the business of mission: secondly, in proposing not the same, but such a kind of mark for men to judge by, as our saviour do's; that is, such an one as is easy, and liable to all men's observation. And this is all the imitation my words can be understood to mean.

He go's on: *And if our saviour mention'd not mission in one case, that is no precedent for Mr. P's not mentioning it in another very different.* But I hope 'tis, where the case is not different, but the same. *If a false prophet may be discover'd by his fruits, what plausible evidence soever he may bring of his mission; it will by no means follow, that an ordinary ministry may be chosen or justified by its success, without considering by what authority it is appointed.* I never pretended to gather that rule from our saviour's words, tho' Dr. *Whitby* might have led me to it. The rule it self is gather'd from other

other texts : and 'twas not fair in a man of his conduct to represent his adversary as drawing a consequence he do's not mention.

After I had in my *preface* set down our saviour's rule, I added : " And without all doubt, this is a  
 " warrant to the people of *England* to beware of a  
 " great part of those who would invalidate all our  
 " ministrations. For if looseness and debauchery ;  
 " unthankfulness to God and man for the greatest  
 " deliverances ; the sowing strife and contention ; the  
 " stirring up to sedition, rapine and sacrilege ; the in-  
 " couraging rebellion against the best of kings ; and  
 " the prevaricating both with God and man in sub-  
 " scriptions, prayers, and the most plain, express, and  
 " and solemn oaths ; if these, I say, are not fruits bad  
 " enough to prove men false prophets, and to teach  
 " us to beware of them, I can't conceive what use  
 " our saviour's rule can be of. And here my moral  
 conduct falls under examination : tho' if this be the  
 worst part of it, I fear not to acquit my self to the  
 world. He calls this, *p. 9. a most confident and unchar-  
 itable censure* ; and says : *Such their guilt is neither con-  
 fessed, nor notorious, nor possible to be proved. The black  
 imputation can be grounded on no better than uncertain  
 surmises ; and the confidence of it can never be reconciled  
 with the love either of peace, or truth ; of candour, cha-  
 rity, or justice.* That this guilt is notorious, cannot  
 with any modesty be denied ; but it ought most bit-  
 terly to be bewail'd, even by those who are clear of  
 it, the mischief being unspeakable which it do's to  
 religion and the government. I can truly say, I am  
 glad when I hear of any virtuous clergymen. I envy  
 them not the advantage they may seem to have for a  
 more extensive usefulness, and as heartily respect them  
 and wish them success in their works, as I do those  
 of our own side. But as the interest both of religion  
 and the government is so deeply concern'd, a man  
 cannot but be inquisitive about it ; and all the accounts  
 that ever I could hear, confirm the truth of what I  
 have said. The great *looseness and debauchery* of many  
 of our bitterest adversaries depends not on *uncertain  
 surmises*, but is easily to be observ'd. And the manner  
 in



in which the revolution, and the glorious memory of king *William* has been treated, and the rancor and bitterness with which they have fallen upon the duke of *Marlborough*, whom God honour'd to be the instrument of breaking the threatning power of *France*, will, if any thing in the world can do it, fix the *character of unthankfulness to God and man for the greatest deliverances* upon a great number of them. And what else can we make of their open discouraging of rejoicings for the successes God has given us; and their being lifted up and shewing themselves pleased, as tho' it were their day, when the advantage was on our adversaries side? And as to the *sowing strife and contention, and stirring up to sedition, rapine, and sacrilege*; I may appeal to their Sermons, to the discovery they have made of themselves in conversation, and to what has been done at one of the famous seminaries, where our high clergy learn the principles they afterwards scatter thro' the nation. And if they have no inclination this way, why are they so fond of such writers of news and pamphlets, as notoriously design to promote these things? If I am mistaken in them in this respect, I am not mistaken alone; the *Jacobites* must have pretty much the same sentiments, or they would never commit their seditious writings to them especially, as the most trusty dispersers of them. And the same kind of arguments will fix upon them the charge of *incouraging rebellion against the best of kings, and the prevaricating with God and man in subscriptions, prayers, and oaths*; not to mention the declarations some of them have not stuck to make, of the reasons of their taking the oaths, and using the prayers, or their affecting the company of the *Pretender's* friends, and giving them their utmost assistance. I must confess these things appear so notorious to me, that I am sometimes tempted to go by the rule, which the late excellent bishop *Burnet* is said to have observed in judging concerning the clergy.

He would next suggest, a great part of our ministers may as well be condemn'd by our saviour's rule; as a great part of the Clergy. *Should it be said, that our saviour's foremention'd rule is a warrant to the people of England,*

England, to beware of a great part of the dissenting teachers; for that, tho' they come in sheeps cloathing, with great pretences to innocence and meekness and moderation; yet their bitter and uncharitable reflections, their factious and schismatical practices, the rigorous and arbitrary proceedings of them and their disciples when in power, their eagerness after blood and revenge, these and the like fruits shew them to be inwardly ravening wolves: this were no more than might be said upon as good grounds at least, as what is said by Mr. P. But his uncharitable censures, how provoking soever, shall never be retaliated by me; much less his confidence in them imitated.

And yet I believe every one will take these *innuendo's* to be design'd as so many charges by way of retaliation. But as the truth of our charge is notorious, we defy his retaliation. Our *innocence*, *meekness*, and *moderation* are conspicuous to the whole nation, and render'd the more so by the grievous provocations we have receiv'd from his friends. And when our *reflections* exceed not obvious truth, they can't be tax'd as *bitter and uncharitable*. *Factious and schismatical* principles we hold none: we leave these to high church, who have as peculiarly distinguish'd themselves by them, as any men in the world. Nor are we chargeable with *rigorous and arbitrary proceedings*. That there were some such used, thro' the influence of a few selfish men in *Cromwel's* time, we do not deny, many of which were disapproved then by the party; but whatever was rigorous and arbitrary in our own, as well as any other party, we utterly dislike, and therefore ought not to be reproach'd with it, especially by those whose *little finger* has been *thicker* than our *loins*. As to his suggesting our *eagerness after blood and revenge*, I can't imagine what he means; unless he is displeas'd with us, that we were not desirous that incouragement should be given to the raising new rebellions, by sparing all that were open rebels. We desire no other severity than what will be for the security of the government, nor do we see that more has been used. And when this is all that can be pretended, I wonder how he could think it

it consistent with his *moral conduct* to represent this under the odious character of an *eagerness after blood, and revenge*. Nor would it have been a mistake in his *rational conduct*, if he had spar'd this reflection: for certainly it do's not appear very friendly to the government; and therefore 'twould have been more prudent in a man, that writes himself a *clergyman of the church of England*, to have omitted it, when he is denying the clergy's prevaricating in their oaths. People will be apt to suspect he knows himself more of the matter than he cares to own, and that he had some special reason for his passing over a black imputation so very slightly.

In my *preface* I give this reason, why some misunderstood my former *Se mon*: "Some have over-look'd the nature of that success I argued from, in the *Sermon*, which is no other than the *forming Christ* in men, so as that they become the *Epistle of Christ*." This, he says, *p. 10. is a very uncouth way of explaining himself*. I am very sorry, he should so esteem it; since I only make use of two expressions of the apostle, who do's not use to be counted an *uncouth* writer. And tho' the terms are metaphorical, yet I don't see any reason I have to be displeas'd with my self for using them. The persons I spoke of placed the success too low, in a bare sobriety, without any regard to the other christian virtues; and I thought it was proper for me, that I might set forth their mistake, to speak of the success in as high and lofty an expression, (which yet signifies the thing I design) as any the scripture affords. And so he may see I speak of that expression of *forming Christ* in men, in the *Sermon*, *p. 16*. And why is this then reckon'd *uncouth*? And as to the other expression of persons becoming the *epistle of Christ*, 'tis in the very words of my text, and was very proper to put persons in mind, they ought not to object against me any success, that was not great enough to answer the greatness of that expression.

He adds: *That from hence, and from what he says in the Sermon refer'd to, supposing him to speak good sense, we may gather his meaning to be this, viz. That the*



*success he speaks of, is the making men true and sincere christians, &c.* 'Tis very certain this is my meaning ; and I am indifferent whether I am allowed to speak good sense or not, by men that will doubt of it, upon the account of my using the apostle's expressions, to signify the same thing that he meant by them. But he adds : *Thence it will follow that we can no better judge of the success of any ministry, than we can of the hearts of those, who live under it.* This is very true. But then the question is ; whether we may not, by persons christian behaviour and conversation, have sufficient reason to judge their hearts to be sincere. The apostle speaks of a man's shewing his faith by his works, of mens faith and obedience coming abroad, and being spoken of in the world. Nor do I ever appeal to any other success, than such as is obvious.

I said further in the *preface* : " Some have thought " the apostle could not prove his apostleship by success ; because then every successful minister would " be prov'd an apostle. A short answer to which, " and to other objections of the like nature, is sufficient : That success only proves men to be what " they pretend to, and not what they do not."

Here he says : *This is a short answer indeed, but not sufficient. For, if this be so, then if any pretend a call to the ministry by special revelation, success will prove such their call.* 'Tis very true, it did so in the case of the apostle, who was call'd by special revelation. And when I meet with any such success as my argument is grounded upon, attending one who falsely pretends a call by special revelation, I shall then think 'tis time to answer this objection : for at present I believe no such thing.

He goes on : *Then too, success will prove the regularity, as well as the validity of any ministry, that doth but pretend to it.* I answer the regularity and validity of a ministry are widely different things. The regularity, which signifies its conformity to a rule, can only be judg'd of by the scripture rule. But when we talk of the validity of a ministry, we only mean that a ministry is own'd by Christ, that he concurs with it, and ratifies its acts. And this may be, when thro' a mistake  
of

of the rule in lesser circumstances, a regularity may be wanting. Nor did ever any man appeal to success, or any thing but the scripture, as an evidence of the regularity of a ministry; and when any do, and have the success I speak of, this objection will be to the purpose.

In the next place he comes to debate with me :

1. *How the Corinthians were the epistle of Christ in St. Paul's behalf.* Here I lay the stress upon their conversion : he insists upon it, that it must be their *miraculous conversion*. He very truly supposes, p. 11. *I will here except against the term [miraculous] and will say that 'tis brought in without sufficient ground in the words of scripture.* And I think there is sufficient ground for such an exception. For it would be very strange, if the apostle should never, thro' his whole argument, give the least hint of that, upon which the greatest stress is to be laid. A man must have taken very little notice of his close way of reasoning, and his frequent couching an argument as 'twere in a single word, who will expect to meet with any thing of this nature in his *Epistles*. Let us now hear his reasons for his adding the term, *miraculous*.

*But since Mr. P. himself insists that the Corinthians were such an epistle, in regard of their conversion by St. Paul's ministry; since they were certainly converted in a miraculous way, St. Paul himself alleging, 1 Cor. II. 4. that his preaching among them was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit, and of power; and 2 Cor. XII. 12. that the signs of an apostle were wrought among them in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds; and lastly, since they were undeniably an epistle (as it were) the more universally known and read, and much the more manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, by the miraculous manner of their conversion; I see no reason to suppose their bare conversion refer'd to, without regard to the said manner of it; which makes so evidently for St. Paul's purpose, and gives so much clearness to his reasoning. Upon this I will make a few remarks.*

(1.) 'Tis not certain, that all that were converted by the apostle, were converted miraculously ; nor is it unreasonable to suppose, that many might be converted by his bare preaching, and the more common operations of the spirit. His *reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*, made a heathen magistrate *tremble*, when he probably wrought no miracle before him ; and why the Holy Spirit might not concur with the ordinary means then, and make them effectual, when no extraordinary ones were used, I cannot imagine. Now since the apostle speaks in the general of those converted by his ministry, as an epistle of Christ, and makes no distinction of some converted in an ordinary, others in a miraculous manner, 'tis reasonable to judge he reckon'd them all to be thus an epistle of Christ in his behalf.

(2.) The miraculous, and the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit were then very different, and often separated from one another ; and therefore the apostle may well enough be suppos'd to argue sometimes from the one, and sometimes from the other according as he saw occasion. These operations were different not only in their nature, but in their effect. The miraculous operations serv'd to convince the understanding, and this was sometimes done, as in the case of *Simon Magus*, when there was no change wrought in the heart by sanctifying operations of the Spirit. And as the apostle sometimes appeals to the miraculous operations of the Spirit, without any regard to his sanctifying ones ; so he may well be allow'd at other times to appeal to his sanctifying operations, without any regard to those that were miraculous.

(3.) The only way to know which he refers to, is by considering the expressions he uses, and comparing them with the context : and both these clearly establish the interpretation I have given. The author himself is not able to refer us to the least hint given by the apostle, either in the text or context, that he had any regard to the miraculous operations of the Spirit. Nothing is mention'd in the text but his sanctifying ordinary operations.

And



And further, the whole context is perfectly agreeable hereto. For the clearing this matter, I desire the reader to peruse what he says from the 14. *verse* of the foregoing chapter. v. 14. *Now thanks be to God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.* v. 15. *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish.* v. 16. *To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life: and who is sufficient for these things?* v. 17. *For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.* Having intention'd his travels before, he thanks God, at the 14. *verse*, for the satisfaction and joy he had, that his service in preaching the gospel was acceptable to God, and that he vouchsafed him that success herein, which baffled the little insinuations of those, who attempted to disparage his ministry. And having in the 15. and 16. *verses* shew'd how acceptable he was to God in what he did, at the 17. he gives a reason why God thus accepted him, and own'd him by success. *For we are not as many, &c.* Where he may well be understood to reflect upon such pretenders, as raised a faction against him in the church of *Corinth*, and to intimate that they had not such success; and the reason was, because they were so unlike to him in sincerity in preaching the gospel. And 'tis evident one main design he has here, and in many other parts of this *Epistle*, is to justify his sincerity, as a minister of Christ. And tho' miracles were a fuller confirmation of the truth of the christian religion; yet when they were so common in that age, they might not, for ought I know, be so full a confirmation of Christ's approving a particular ministry, and so of a persons sincerity, as that abundant success the apostle appeal'd to. *Judas* had the same power of working miracles with the rest of the apostles: and if some understand that text, *Hebr.* vi. 4. aright, 'twill be probable several had then the power of working miracles, who were not sincere christians. I will not vouch it for certain, that this was the apostles reason, why he appeals as he do's; but

but this is evident, that he refers wholly to his success. To go on then with his discourse; he begins to apologize as it were for his speaking for himself, chap. iii. 1, 2, 3. *Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle, &c. q. d.* "But can there be any need  
 "I should speak of that abundant success wherewith  
 "Christ has born witness to my ministry, and attested  
 "his acceptance of my sincere services in other places,  
 "when you have such a full proof of the same among  
 "your selves? You have seen how faithful I have  
 "been in preaching the gospel, and God has own'd  
 "me as such among you; so that your conversion by  
 "my preaching is a testimony from God to the world,  
 "both of my sincerity, and his acceptance." And so in the text he speaks of the *Corinthians*, as *the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but by the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart*: where there is not the least hint of his intending any of the miraculous operations of the Spirit; but his expression looks as tho' it were chosen on purpose, to denote only those operations which are for the renewing the hearts of men.

Thus again he speaks of his ministry to the same purpose, v. 6. *Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.* Here he still keeps to the same comparison he had suggested in the text, shewing he was not such a minister of God, as *Moses* was, to bring a law from God written in stone, but to minister the spirit, as a spirit of life, *i. e.* a sanctifying spirit. And so the stress of his argument still lies in the sanctifying operations of the Spirit. In the rest of his discourse in this chapter, he goes on with the same comparison, shewing that the design of a gospel ministry was to convey the spirit, to form men to glory. Now this he lets us know is done, not by miracles, but by discovering the glory of the lord to them, whereby they are impress'd with a resemblance of that glory, v. 18. *But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit*

*Spirit of the lord.* And it appears, that he is all along here upon the same argument, by his resuming in the two first verses of the iv. chap. what he had mention'd of his faithfulness, chap. ii. 17. *Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not : but have renounced the bidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* So that upon the whole, the bringing in the term, *miraculous*, is only to serve an hypothesis, and has not the least countenance from the apostle's discourse. And this confirms me very much in my argument, as it shews this author and his friends could not give a fair answer to it, but were forced upon such an unreasonable interpretation to avoid it.

Our author, supposing that the success the apostle speaks of was owing to miracles, tells us, p. 12. *'Tis manifest,*

2. *That this will not warrant any other pretended ministry, that is successful, unless it be miraculously so, i. e. successful by miracle.* I have overthrown the reason of this pretence, and so need not particularly answer it. And indeed he seems to lay the stress so wholly upon the miracles ; and talks of the success as a thing so impossible to be known, that I wonder he did not find out a way wholly to exclude it from the apostle's argument. But I desire the reader here to consider, whether an episcopal clergyman should have made this objection, even supposing his ground work rightly laid. The example of the apostles in laying on hands is pleaded to vindicate the bishops laying on hands in confirmation : but what warrant can the practice of the apostles be, according to this gentleman, for the bishops, since the success of the apostles therein was by miracle, as that of the bishops confessedly is not ? And if they may argue after that rate in one case, why should he be displeased, supposing I had, as I have not, argued in like manner in another ? He next proceeds to inquire,

3. *How far success may justify or recommend any ministry.* And here he says : *It is usual, we know, with God*



*to bring good out of evil, to make the wickedness of man subservient to his glory, and to compass a good end, by means in the human agents sinful. And therefore good success alone can never justify the actions of men instrumental to it.*

This author, in the next page, acknowledges the success we speak of proves the interposition of Christ, viz. by his Spirit in the hearts of men. Now where mens ministrations are counted by Christ utterly invalid and null, and he do's not own them as his ministers, tho' they assume that character; I cant think, he will favour them with such signal interpolitions: and the apostle, as I have shewn, seems to be of the same mind, 2 Cor. II. 17. Or if he please, he may consider this matter in the case of two ministries, in some respects opposite to one another; as he knows I proposed to try the pretences of episcopal and dissenting ministers thereby. Let us then suppose, there are two ministries, the one authorized by Christ, and the other both irregular and invalid, utterly disapprov'd by Christ, not only in some particular less considerable circumstance, but in the very essence of it. I put it now to this Author: Do's he believe in his conscience, that Christ will by his own interposition give a greater success to that ministry which he utterly disapproves, than to that which he counts regular and valid? This for my own part I can never believe; and yet I would never have made use of the argument, had I not thought it notoriously evident, that the success of gospel administrations is chiefly among the dissenters; and that the little religion that is left in the nation is mostly among us, notwithstanding the vast inequality of our number. See p. 30. of the first Sermon. And I can't but observe, how our author is forced to qualify his expression in the next sentence: *More particularly, 'tis not at all strange that God should SOMETIMES give force and efficacy to his word and other means in themselves proper, tho' apply'd by usurpers of the ministry, especially for the benefit of such as in the simplicity of their hearts mistake those usurpers for lawful ministers, and would not otherwise adhere to them.* But I suppose, it would seem very strange indeed, if he should much oftener give such force and efficacy to the means when apply'd by usurpers, than when apply'd

ply'd by those whom alone he counts lawful ministers. I cannot but think what I suggested in the *Sermon*, p. 21, 22. is considerable : "That there is the more reason to argue the validity of a ministry from the success of it, because this is an argument from the principal design and end of the office." And certainly that must be the best ministry, and most fit to be chosen, that best answers the end of the institution. And if Christ has promis'd to *be with* his ministers *always to the end of the world*, there can be no danger in supposing those to be his ministers, he is apparently most with. I own, if a man were to judge by a single instance or two, he might be more liable to mistake. But as this was not the case of the apostle, who had been instrumental to convert many at *Corinth*; so neither is it the case I argue upon, when I compare the episcopal and dissenting ministries, as I believe is visible to all men. This therefore I take for a sufficient evidence, that the dissenting ministry is more approved by God, than the episcopal. And I shall not take this author's confident assertion, p. 13. for a proof, that *'tis manifestly false, that such interposition of Christ (in the ordinary way) is a sufficient evidence of Christ's owning and authorizing any ministry.*

He adds : *And if ordinary success be (as I am persuaded Mr. P. himself, if put to it, will own that it is) insufficient to prove a due call, it must of course be allowed insufficient to justify the exercise, or direct the choice, of a ministry.* What I own may be easily seen from what I have said before. Ordinary success, where 'tis clear and plain, is sufficient to prove God's approbation of a ministry in the main, tho' not of every particular circumstance of a person's entrance upon it : and so 'tis sufficient to prove a due call, according to the definition he gives of a due call in his next words. *For if the want of regular ordination may in some cases be dispensed with, yet without a due call, i. e. some credible intimation of the will of God, appointing such or such persons to act as his ministers, neither ought they to presume to act, or others to make use of them, as his ministers.* Now our author here supposes, there may be a due call, that is some credible intimation of the will

of God, appointing such and such persons to act as his ministers, without a regular ordination. And if it be so, I can't imagine what he has to object against me, who suppose there is all the other intimations of the will of God, beside that of a regular ordination; that is, I suppose, the only thing wanting in the case is the scripture rite, while the essence of ordination is retain'd.

In the next place he argues, that *success will not serve as a rule, whereby to judge of mens pretences to a due call, because 'tis neither discernable in it self, nor by any ordinary tokens to be certainly collected by mortal men. Hardly can a man know that Christ is form'd in himself; and much less can he know that of others. God alone can with certainty distinguish between hypocrites and true saints; unless when, upon some extraordinary occasion, he is pleased to give men supernatural notices in that kind; a thing that very rarely, or never, happens in these days. And tho' we are bound in charity not to censure any as hypocrites, whose behaviour, as appearing to us, is christian-like; yet the love of truth will not suffer us to infer a man's intire regeneration as a thing certain, from any ordinary good outward behaviour, nor prudence unnecessarily to direct our own conduct in matters of moment by so uncertain an inference. And experience hath made it but too manifest, that in those congregations, wherein the outward appearances of sanctity (such especially as vulgar christians are most apt to judge by) are greater and more numerous than ordinary; yet there may be as few persons endu'd with real and substantial holiness, as in others. To this argument I answer:*

1. That if it proves anything, it proves too much; because it quite overthrows the apostle's argument, even according to this author's own account of it. For he makes the *Corinthians*, by reason of their conversion, so miraculously wrought, to be in effect the epistle of Christ, certifying the apostle to be his minister, *p. 111.* and this epistle he supposes with the apostle to be written on the hearts of men. So that since by his own concession, the apostle argues from the change of the heart, his own interpretation must be liable to the same objection with mine. For the heart was as unsearchable in one case



as the other; and even the miracles by which a person was convinced, did not ascertain the inward change of the heart, as appears by *Simon Magus*.

2. Our author is mistaken in supposing, as he seems to do, that in matters of moment, we are not to go upon any thing less than absolute certainty. How can the unlearned have such a certainty of the faithfulness of any translation of the holy scriptures, even in the most momentous passages thereof? How can a man receive the sacrament at the hands of a strange minister, without seeing himself the copy of his orders, and examining too whether they are genuine, and not forged, if he may only act in such matters upon an absolute certainty? And this author himself, for ought I see, endeavours to fix the business of episcopacy upon a scriptural probability, with which the evidence from antiquity concurs or is consistent; this he thinks must, in reason, determine all our doubts in this matter, *p. 58, 59*. And why may not a rational probability then determine us in the present case?

3. The scripture all along supposes that men do by their outward behaviour discover the inward disposition of their hearts. So our saviour, *Matth. XII. 33, 35*. *Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit.—— A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.* And *St. James, chap. ii. 18*. speaks of shewing our faith by our works. *St. Paul* sent to know the faith of the *Thessalonians*, *1 Thess. III. 5*. and received by *Timothy*, the messenger he sent, *good tidings of their faith and charity, v. 6*. And yet I suppose these tidings were not gain'd by a special revelation afforded to *Timothy*, but by what he observed among them, as an evidence of their faith and charity. Or however, I hardly think it was owing to a special revelation, that in every place their faith to God ward was spread abroad; *chap. i. 8*. *Comp. Philem. v. 5*. And if we must go upon such certainty, as our author seems to require; how impertinent are many directions given in scripture? *St. Paul* bids *Timothy*, *2 Tim. ii. 22*. *follow righteousness,*  
F 2 *faith,*

*faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the lord out of a pure heart.* “ Whence, Dr. *Whitby* says, it follows, that we must maintain peace with, and therefore must not separate from our communion any person, who serves Christ with a pure heart.” And Dr. *Hammond* interprets the apostle, as requiring “ a conjunction and agreement with all those that in purity and sincerity adhere constantly to Christ.” And if I may know those who do thus, that I may join with them; I may as well know the success of a ministry upon them: for the success lies in this very thing.

Again the apostle requires, that such as were to be ordain’d should be *faithful men*, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. and hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, 1 *Tim.* iii. 9. That their wives be faithful, v. 11. and their children, *Tit.* i. 6. Now certainly this is a matter of great moment, and yet what other certainty can the ordainers go upon in judging of these things, than what the people may in judging of success?

4. What outward appearances our author pretends vulgar christians are most apt to judge by, I know not; but I can never believe that in those congregations, where there are such outward appearances, as the scripture directs us to judge by, that is where the christian virtues appear most exemplified in the whole conversation; I say I can never believe, there may be as few persons therein endued with real and substantial holiness, as in others where there are not the like.

I hope I have fully answer’d this cavil; and therefore proceed to another which he immediately subjoins, p. 14. *Besides, if we could discern when Christ is form’d in men; yet were it impossible to know in any ordinary way, and with any certainty, that that work is wrought by such or such a ministry, as instrumental under God, and not by some other method of divine grace; unless we may be otherwise assur’d, that the said ministry is of God, that is, call’d by him, and so entitled to his blessing and concurrence.* I cannot imagine, he can have any other ground for this assertion than this; that God never concurs with any ministry, but what is call’d by him, and so entitled to his blessing and concurrence.

currence. If this be not his reason, why is it so necessary that I must be otherwise assured a ministry is of God, before I can know he makes it instrumental? Now if this be the ground of his assertion, I infer from it :

1. That he establishes the rule of judging which I have advanced ; for if God never concurs with any ministry, but what is call'd by him ; then that success which I argue from, as proving his concurrence, must prove the ministry to be call'd of God.

2. He is so extremely obliging to me, that to establish my rule, he sticks not to contradict himself. For how contrary to this is what he says, *p. 12.* *'Tis not at all strange that God should sometimes give force and efficacy to his word and other means, in themselves proper, tho' apply'd by usurpers of the ministry, especially for the benefit of such as in the simplicity of their hearts mistake those usurpers for lawful ministers, and would not otherwise adhere to them. And therefore the success of the ministrations will not prove a right or due call to the ministry.* I suppose one single friend is not intitled to the merit of both these remarks (See the Pref. *p. 4.*) they are so very different, that in all probability they proceeded from two distinct authors. I will not however content my self with confuting the one by the other ; but I further add, that 'tis no impossible thing to know, whether this work is wrought by such, or such a ministry. This is very easy, in most cases at least, to be discerned ; and especially where we put the case between the episcopal and dissenting ministry, and persons are supposed wholly to attend upon one of them. A man may be sensible, by what means he was made seriously to mind religion, and what 'tis that God makes use of to direct and encourage him to hold on in it. And christians themselves are here the most competent judges, and we can have no other certainty of this, than from what they declare themselves. And I make no doubt, good christians of all parties will readily own, God has render'd the ministry they sat under, instrumental to the making them what they are. For tho' such are awaken'd sometimes by unusual providences to serious consideration,



ration; yet, as far as I can perceive, the settling and carrying on of that work is by this institution, as the great means.

He adds: *The wisest of uninspir'd mortals therefore are not competent judges of the real inward success of any ministry, much less the ordinary sort of christians.* This is a mistake; ordinary christians are competent judges of the inward success, so far as there is any occasion for their judging of it. They are able to distinguish, when a conversation is well order'd, and when 'tis not; and by that only is the inward success to be judg'd of by them. *And yet, says he, Mr. P. is pleas'd to recommend his rule of success as level to the capacities of all.* And without doubt 'tis so; or else well doing would not be sufficient to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; and the having a good conscience would be no way to shame those that speak evil of us, as of evil doers, and falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ. 1 Pet. ii. 15. iii. 16. But he goes on:

*I hope Mr. P. after having told us, out of a declar'd purpose to obviate mistakes, that the success he argues from is the forming Christ in men, will not after all come and say, that he means no more by it, than the bringing of their conversation to a christian-like form: tho' I see several indications of an unsettledness in this matter.* And is this the rational and moral conduct of the man, who is such a severe and watchful censurer of mine? Let any one peruse the whole *Sermon*, and see whether he can find the least syllable to incline him to think I intended persons should any other-wise judge, than by the conversation. Let any man read p. 14, 15, 16. of the *Sermon*, and he will see, not only how unreasonable, but how malicious, this cavil and reflection is.

I beg leave here to transcribe the whole passage of my *Sermon* to which I have refer'd, which will set my innocence, and this gentleman's honesty in a clear light. I said then: "The *Corinthians* are represented  
" as the epistle of Christ, or a declaration of his will,  
" upon a double account. 1. Because they were by  
" their conversion form'd to the mind and will of  
" Christ. He has made a declaration of his will in  
" his

his word, from which we are to learn our religion, and to which we are to have recourse as to a sure standard, in the examining and trying every doctrine. But little notice is taken of this by a careless world, who will not be at the pains of learning what our religion is, out of the perfect rule of it. Christ therefore has taken care in a more easy way to give them notices of it; and by changing the hearts and lives of sinners, he sets before their eyes examples of the religion he has instituted, and shews the world what the design of the gospel is. This is a likely means of abating their unreasonable prejudices, and winning them to an attentive consideration of the revelation he has left us. For if men will allow themselves to make any serious reflections, they must be sensible of an extraordinary excellency and loveliness in a *truly christian conversation*. When the rules of the gospel are copied out fairly into the *life*, the lustre of them is too great not to strike the beholders with admiration. This should make Christians careful to *live up to their rule*, that, as our saviour says, *their light may so shine before men, as that they may see their good works, and glorify their father who is in heaven*. 'Tis no unlikely thing, that such as at present *do not obey the word, may without the word by the good conversation* of Christians be won, first to a liking, and then to a hearty embracing christianity. So that the *circumspect deportment* of christians is a compendious kind of declaration of the mind of Christ to an inconsiderate world; who may by beholding it, learn what *sobriety, temperance, humility, meekness, self-denial, equity, charity, mercifulness, trust in God, resignation and devotedness* to his will, and, in short, what *universal holiness* Christ expects in his disciples and followers. We are led to this sense of the expression by the last clause of the text, wherein he compares their conversion to the giving of the old law, and says, *this epistle of Christ was not written in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart*, q. d. This is a more excellent and noble way, which Christ has taken to write, and, as it

were

“ were, publish his law. He has deeply ingraven it  
 “ upon, and made it an inward governing principle  
 “ of your hearts, and all your actions which proceed  
 “ from them; by means whereof all that converse with  
 “ you may easily come to the knowledge of it. It  
 “ cannot be objected reasonably against this sense,  
 “ that the expression is too great for the thing; since  
 “ that is sometimes set forth in the holy scriptures  
 “ by more lofty expressions than *the epistle of Christ* :  
 “ such as *Christ form’d in christians*, and *Christ dwell-*  
 “ *ling in them*. True christians then are *the epistle of*  
 “ *Christ*, when *their conversation is conform’d to the*  
 “ *rule of the gospel*, and appears a kind of tran-  
 “ script of the mind and will of Christ.”

And now can any one, who reads this, make any doubt, whether I design’d christians should judge of the success of a ministry by the change of the heart any otherwise, than as that change discover’d itself in its fruits in the life and conversation? For my part, I must stretch my charity, if I should not believe that this author and his friends, who do not want for cunning, were fully satisfied, I meant no more, and therefore talk’d of *seeing several indications of an unsettledness in my notions*, only as a cover for their baseness. I defy them to produce those indications. And whereas ’tis pretended, I say *the success I argue from is the forming Christ in men*, ’tis true I do so, but without the least hint of my intending any other way of judging, whether Christ be form’d in them or not, than by what appears in the conversation. And that expression was, as I said before, used by me in the *preface*, only to set forth the greatness of the thing I argued from, in opposition to those who set it too low; which I still look upon to be very proper, nor should I do otherwise were it to do again, however he may think it *uncouth*. For I know no expression that sets forth the greatness of the thing more fully, and that I used it for that end, he may easily see by the passage cited out of the *Sermon*.

He goes on: *If it be ask’d now, whether success will not, at least, prove the validity of a ministry; which is all that Mr. P. seems now willing to contend for: And by*



by what do's it in the least appear, I was ever willing to contend for more? I am sure, I had not the least design of carrying the matter further in composing the *Sermon*; and the *second Sermon*, which declares my notion concerning ordination, was compos'd long before that first printed; and since I had not alter'd my notion from what is express'd in the *second*, how can it be likely I ever intended to plead for more than a validity by the *first*? And indeed in composing the *Sermon* first printed, I was all along aware, that the ordination of some, whose cause I was pleading, did not come up to what I count a regular ordination.

Now let us hear what he says to this question: *I answer*, says he, *that all his arguments have tended to shew, that success proves a ministry own'd and authoriz'd by Christ, which is, in effect, duly call'd*. If by *duly call'd* he means *really and truly call'd*, I grant it: if he means *regularly call'd*, I deny my argument has tended to prove it; or that this is necessarily imply'd in Christ's owning and authorizing a ministry.

But he will come to the matter, p. 15. *A ministry*, says he, *is so far valid, as 'tis effectual to those purposes, to which Christ intended the ministry in his church should be effectual*. And so it may be valid either in all respects, or only in some. And wherein 'tis valid, it may be so either [per se] in its own right proceeding from Christ's institution of, and promise to his ministry; or [per accidens] accidentally, as to the said ministry, out of such regards of the divine goodness, to which it hath no claim. I have inserted this parade of metaphysical distinctions, that he may not complain of my leaving out any thing, wherein he may imagine the clearness of his reasoning is discover'd. I am only concern'd to examine how they affect our controversy in the application he next makes of them.

Now, says he, *whether a ministry be valid, so far as it is successful to the proper purposes of a ministry, can be no question; unless it may be doubted, whether a successful ministry may be successful*. But success in one respect will not prove a ministry valid in another, not included in that. The drift of all this is, that a ministry may,

by the success, appear valid as to the business of preaching, but not of baptizing. He fancies he has a brave evasion, and that I cannot apply my argument here at all; because all the success of baptism, especially in the ordinary cases of infants, he looks upon to be so latent, as that it cannot be gather'd by our observation, as the success of preaching may. As I take this to be his design, I shall have a regard to it in my answer, which I shall comprehend in these four rules, which appear, to me at least, to afford us a very rational way of judging.

1. That success which will serve to evidence the validity of the administration of an ordinance to one person, will likewise prove the validity of the same administration to another; supposing there is an equal right in both to have it administered to them. I take it for granted, that christian infants have a right to baptism, as well as those who not having been baptiz'd in their infancy, do make an actual profession of their faith and repentance. And so my rule is this: That if a person's administration of baptism appear to be valid by the success of it upon the adult, the administration of it by the same person to an infant is to be look'd upon as valid also. And here the success I speak of in the case of the adult, is liable to observation; and such persons as behave themselves as becomes christians afterwards, are best able to declare whether they found their baptism to produce the proper effects of baptism or not.

2. Another rule I would advance is this: That when a ministry appears to be valid in a greater and more chief end of its institution, 'tis reasonable to suppose 'tis so likewise with respect to any inferior purposes of it. If a person's act is confessedly valid in passing a judicial sentence in case of life and death, 'tis but reasonable to think his act is valid in passing a judicial sentence in case of lesser penalties. This author owns, our ministry may be valid to the converting and saving sinners, I therefore infer 'tis valid as to baptism. And the reason is, because the thing 'tis confessedly valid for, is much greater than that for which he denies 'tis valid. And if this be not plain in itself, let the words

words of the apostle be consider'd, where he compares baptizing and preaching of the gospel together, and sets the latter above the former, 1 Cor. 1. 14, 17. *I thank God I baptiz'd none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, &c. For Ch ist sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: i. e. not so much to baptize, as to preach the gospel.* The success therefore I argue from with respect to preaching, will infer as well the validity of our baptisms, as of our preaching.

3. That success which evidences the valid administration of one ordinance, do's likewise evidence the valid administration of another, the administration of which was previously necessary. I take it for granted, that our administrations of the lord's supper are valid, because they are evidently successful to the proper purposes of that institution; hence then I infer, our administrations of baptism must likewise be valid, because baptism is previously necessary to the lord's supper.

4. As the success of a ministry in one administration confessedly shews it valid in that respect, so success in all administrations shews it valid in all respects. And that this is the case of our ministry is, I think, sufficiently plain.

Next he applies his other distinction: *And if any ministry (so term'd) have not a due call, what success soever it may seem to have, it can have no real success or validity, but what is accidental to it.* If a due call be understood of a real, and not of a regular call, I am not concern'd in this. I speak of such as have a due call, i. e. as he himself defines it, p. 13. *some credible intimation of the will of God appointing them to act as his ministers.*

And for this reason I pass over what he says of the validity and invalidity of a not duly call'd, or an usurped ministry, as to what concerns the eternal salvation of men. For I deny the ministry I defend is usurp'd, or not duly call'd. And if every irregularity in an ordination is sufficient to evidence a ministry is usurp'd, and not duly call'd, he must allow me to think hardly of his own; since he is sensible what I think of the terms by which he obtain'd it; and since I am not con-



vinced of the regularity of a bishop's pretending in ordination to give the Holy Ghost, saying to the person he ordains: *Receive the Holy Ghost*. This was regular enough in our saviour, and in his apostles, who had the power of giving the Holy Ghost: but it may well be question'd, whether it can be so in any men now upon earth. And the excellent Bishop of Bangor seems to me to talk good sense, when he argues, *Preserv. p. 93.* that those words, *Whose soever sins ye remit, &c.* belong'd peculiarly to the apostles; and therefore I much question whether it be regular for the bishop to say to the person he ordains: *Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retain'd.* And if an irregularity in an ordination renders a ministry usurped and not duly call'd; certainly there was irregularity enough in the popish ordinations, from whence the protestant episcopal ordinations are so carefully deriv'd.

Our Author tells us: *All the respects in which a ministry may, or may not be valid, are reducible to these two,*

1. *As to what concerns the eternal salvation of men.* And here he will not take upon him to deny that a ministry, not duly call'd, may, accidentally, have such success upon some persons, viz. to put them into a state of salvation. But then he says: *To choose an usurped ministry (how seemingly successful soever) is a sin, which, if wilfully committed, must certainly (till repented of) exclude from the kingdom of heaven.* Now an usurped ministry is what I never attempted to defend, and therefore am not concern'd in what he here says. However I will add: That it would seem very strange to me, if God should make an usurped ministry more successful, than such an one as is duly call'd. Nor do I see how a ministry can be thought valid to put men in a state of salvation, without being valid in all the administrations, that are suppos'd necessary in order thereto.

The other branch of his division follows:

2. *As to what concerns the outward polity of the church, a ministry is then valid, when the acts of it (as, v. g. its excommunications and absolutions) are of right*

right to be admitted as effectual to all the purposes of ecclesiastical order and discipline, or not to be treated as void and null in those regards. Our author could not have easily said any thing, that would more disserve the cause of a certain ministry than this. What regard can he think those excommunications and absolutions can deserve, which are managed by persons, with whom 'tis confess'd on all hands Christ never lodg'd the government of his church, and who only manage them to squeeze money out of people? Such excommunications and absolutions are the scandal of any party; and a man must have a very mean opinion of our saviour, if he can believe they are regarded by him, or that any man's conscience should be disquieted, or eased by them. The excommunications and absolutions of men whose ordination I judge irregular, when they are managed by the scripture rule, have in my apprehension a vastly greater authority, and deserve much more regard. And were I to proceed rigidly upon our author's principle, I must certainly persuade great numbers, who have been baptiz'd by such a ministry, to receive a new baptism; which might easily be done with the help of a little of that craft, which is too common with some men.

He adds: *And in this respect I conceive no ministry to be valid, which hath not both a due call to the office, and such an one as may fall under the cognizance of the church.* A little more charity might help him to see, those I plead for have such a call. And where the essentials of an ordination are, I shall never attempt to invalidate it, for the sake of an irregularity in a disputable circumstance. I cannot therefore doubt of the validity of the baptisms of such, both in the sight of God, and in the church.

And thus I have consider'd what this author has to say against the argument of the *Sermon* intitled, *An useful ministry a valid one*, which he owns himself he has not throughout particularly examined; whether he has said enough to prove the insufficiency of my argument, the reader must judge. Nor has he been able to give the least evidence that *my notions appear unsettled and confused*, tho' he over and over reproaches me therewith:

therewith : which is not very fair, especially in a man that pretends to such an exactness in his conduct.

*The tendency of his arguments.* (says he, p. 17.) is to prove success in converting and edifying, a sufficient evidence of a call to the ministry ; and to persuade people to rest satisfied in, and to choose a ministry that appears to have such success, without troubling themselves about its ordination, or any other evidence of its call. But that this was his intention, he will not own : and whether he ever will, or can give a clear and distinct account of what he did mean, I cannot tell.

The tendency of my argument was indeed to shew, that such success was a sufficient evidence of the validity of a ministry ; and I cannot see but it must be so, since 'tis an evidence of Christ's fulfilling to them the promise he made to his ministers of being with them. My design further in not mentioning a regular ordination was, to prevent peoples laying a greater stress upon it, than it will bear. I am heartily for imposition of hands ; but do not think, I ought therefore to question the validity of the ministry of those who have every thing else, that can be requir'd in a minister. And therefore as I dont my self, so neither would I have others, scruple the receiving and joining with such ministers, upon the account of that circumstance, which I acknowledge is an irregularity. And so the whole tendency of my argument was to promote charity, and I don't wonder it therefore was displeasing to some men. Let this author now try, if he can find any thing in either of the two *Sermons* that do's not well agree with this design ; and so I hope I have given a clear and distinct account of what I did mean.

*One thing he thinks proper to add : That nothing but special revelation, or necessity, can amount to a due or sufficient call without regular ordination.* But he is very much mistaken in conceiving I will herein agree with him.

There are one or two passages more in the *preface* to the *Sermon* about *Ordination*, which he thinks fit to take notice of. One is, p. 6. " 'Tis really shocking to  
" me,



“ me, because it carries in it an injurious reflection upon the goodness of God, to imagine, that he will  
 “ merely for the want of a ceremony in a minister’s ordination, omitted not thro’ wilfulness but mistake,  
 “ damn him, tho’ he has all the other qualifications  
 “ of a minister; and damn all those who attend his ministrations, how christian soever their tempers and  
 “ conversations are. To such a length have the furious bigots of our times carried their uncharitable  
 “ and wicked principles, invalidating the ministerial  
 “ acts of all protestants but themselves, and disowning  
 “ the christianity of all dissenters, and consigning them  
 “ over, as a parcel of heathens, to the everlasting  
 “ flames.”

*These things, says he, p. 18. belong not to me, or to our church authentically speaking (nor did I pretend they did) and, I am persuaded, to few of her members. I heartily wish this was true. But since I say nothing in this place of the number of those who act thus, if there are but a few of them, ’tis sufficient to justify me. He adds: They are rather consequences fasten’d on, than conclusions own’d by, even those whom he intends by furious bigots, and whose principles he stiles uncharitable and wicked.*

I remember I had the famous Dr. *Sacheverel* in my thoughts, when I wrote the *paragraph* refer’d to, who has treated us exactly in that manner. In the beginning of his *Sermon* (See his *Trial*, p. 33.) he represents us and the papists as the *false brethren*, from whom they must expect the utmost perils. And p. 45. he represents Christ, as assigning them their portion with hypocrites, and unbelievers, and all liars, that have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, with the grandfather of falsehood, the devil and his angels. “ And so here, (says he) we leave  
 “ our false brethren, in the company they always keep  
 “ correspondence with.” And as the Doctor has been the darling of the party, and his *Sermon* has met with such a prodigious applause, and particularly for its bitterness against us; I might well enough represent this as the sense of those bigots. And this doctrine has been deliver’d by several.

Mr.

Mr. Jacques's *Ordination by mere pre. byters null*, p. 178.

“ To be given up to a blindness of mind, and reprobate sense, seems to be a judgment upon all Fanatics, and the most dreadful vengeance that can befall any sort of people.

And p. 186. “ I tremble to think what a dreadful aggravation of the condition of the damned 'tis, that they are banished from the presence of the lord, and the glory of his power. The same is their condition also, who are disunited from Jesus Christ, by being disunited from his visible representative the bishop.” This passage is taken almost word for word from Mr. *Dodwell* : *One priesthood and one altar*, p. 397. who has many passages more to the like purpose in the same treatise. But I shall content my self with citing one passage from another of his works.

Mr. *Dodwell*, in the *preface* to his *Separation of churches*, p. 11, 12. speaking of those who separate from the church of *England*, says : “ They are guilty of forging covenants in the name of God himself ; and of counterfeiting the great seal of heaven for the ratification of such covenants. And what can be more treasonable by all principles of government ? What is more provoking, and more difficultly pardonable, than sins of so high a presumption as these are ? They must be guilty of *sinning against the Holy Ghost*, and *unto death*, and of the sins described in the passages of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*.

I will name but one more, and that is Dr. *Brett*, who in his *Sermon, On remission of sins*, goes clearly this way. He will not so much as allow what our author do's, that *a true and lively faith (that includes repentance) will put persons into a state of salvation*.

The Doctor denies, p. 18. “ That the conversion of a sinner could blot out his sins.” He says, “ it qualified him indeed to receive remission of sins, but his sins were not thereby remitted ; but by his baptism, the ordinance which Christ himself was pleased to institute for the remission of sins : and that could be effectually administered by none but the apostles, or such as they commission'd for that purpose.”

“ pose. ” And the persons who have this power, he tells us p. 24. are “ the bishops and their presbyters, the successors of the apostles. ”

And p. 37. he has this passage : “ Consider with yourselves, that barely to abstain from the pollutions and corruptions of the world, and to pray to God never so heartily, saying, *Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner*, is not sufficient, according to the promises of God to pardon your sins. It may qualify you to receive pardon, but it do’s not actually pardon you, tho’ you join to it never so full a trust and confidence in the merits of Jesus Christ. But those merits, and this pardon, must be applied to you in the way that he has prescribed to you in his holy gospel, by the ministry of those to whom he has given power on earth to remit sins ; by absolution, and the ministration of the holy sacraments. We cannot say that God will not forgive sins any other way but this : he may forgive and pardon, even as he pleases himself : but this is the way that he has prescribed in his gospel, and therefore howsoever he may remit the sins of such (if there be any such) as have not opportunity to make use of these means of grace ; we have no reason to think he will be merciful to those who slight and despise them ; or that he will pardon the sins of those who will not accept of his pardon, according to the method which he has ordain’d and appointed. ”

And what is this less, than to consign those who do not receive episcopal baptism to the everlasting flames ? This I think go’s farther than our author cares to allow in his next words : *For they among us, who go farthest in judging lay baptisms, and all the acts of such ministers as want episcopal ordination, invalid, and thereupon assert our dissenters, and all that live under such ministries, to be out of the catholic church, and the covenant of grace ; yet do not consign them all to the everlasting flames, do not deny but many of them may have honest hearts, and an intire good meaning, and will not pronounce such (tho’ never injoying the benefit of an episcopal ministry) to be eternally damn’d. They do not presume so far to limit the mercies, however they do the*



*covenant of God.* I have given an instance to the contrary in a *Sermon*, which the convocation did not think fit to censure, when it was complain'd of to them. Now for my part, I can't imagine what men mean, when they pretend to suppose persons, who repent of their sins, have a true and lively faith, and honest hearts, and an intire good meaning; when, I say, they suppose such to be out of the covenant of God, or not to be in a state of salvation according to God's covenant. Where are we to seek for God's covenant but in his word? And what are any of the promises he makes to his people, but parts of his covenant? What then are we to make of the promises he has made: That *he will teach the meek his way*: that *whoever fears the lord, him will he teach in the way he should choose*: that *the secret of the lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant*, Ps. xxv, 9, 12, 14. and that *to him that ordereth his conversation aright he will shew the salvation of God*, Ps. l. 23? What do these and abundance of the like passages mean; if sincere and humble souls, who unfeignedly endeavour to know and do God's will, are not secured of his direction, that they shall be kept from damning errors, and be brought to glory?

He will now vindicate the charity of these bigots. And as for their judging such, as *aforesaid*, to be out of the terms of the covenant, I am sure Mr. P. doth not know that this proceeds from want of charity in them. His censures of them are much more evidently uncharitable and therefore wicked, than their principles. Should I judge such and such (be they who or how many soever) to be out of that path of salvation, which the gospel hath mark'd out for us, and should I publish such my judgment, and earnestly warn them of their supposed danger; tho' I were mistaken, I cannot imagine why I should be censur'd as uncharitable therein. I heartily wish, they who in season, and out of season, make so much noise about charity and moderation, would at the same time express their sincere regard for those virtues by the practice of them; and not behave, as if the duties of peace and love were incumbent upon their adversaries, and not upon themselves.

I won-

I wonder men are not ashamed to talk after this loose and weak rate. Who ever doubted, whether, rash judging (and certainly all false judging mens states is such) was uncharitable? Do not those who write against such judging, always allege this as one argument against it; that 'tis uncharitable? Let any one read Dr. *Barrow* upon *Matth. vii. 1.* or indeed any writer upon that subject. And I would fain have this author consider with himself, what he thinks of the nonjurors, for treating the present church of *England* in that manner, and paying them home in their own coin. Do's he think, there is no uncharitableness in their procedure? How do's he like to hear himself damn'd for taking the oaths to the present government, and for forsaking the bishops, who, they pretend, were unjustly depriv'd, and for joining with schismatical ones? The excellent Bishop of *Bangor* do's not stick to call this *uncharitableness*, and a *heresy against charity*: *Preserv. p. 89.* But I will put a case wherein our author will perhaps be more willing to speak his mind freely. The church of *Rome* damns the church of *England*, as well as all other protestants, as heretics; and they do this without doubt thro' mistake: will then our author undertake to acquit them of all uncharitableness therein? I am sure they dont use to treat them in that manner. Let me mention here Archbishop *Tillotson*, who in his *Sermon* upon *1 Cor. iii. 15.* is confuting that popular argument of the papists: "Your church, say they, grants that a papist may be saved; ours denies that a protestant can be saved: therefore 'tis safest to be of our church, in which salvation by the acknowledgment of both sides is possible." One gross absurdity, which he says follows from this, is: "That according to this principle 'tis always safest to be on the *uncharitable* side. And yet *uncharitableness* is as bad an evidence either of a true christian, or a true church, as a man would wish. *Charity* is one of the most essential marks of christianity, and what the apostle saith of particular christians is as true of whole churches, that *tho' they have all faith, yet if they have not charity they are nothing.* I grant that no charity teacheth

“ men to see others damned, and not to tell them the  
 “ danger of their condition. But it is to be consider’d,  
 “ the damning of men is a very hard thing, and there-  
 “ fore when ever we do it, the case must be wonder-  
 “ fully plain.—So that nothing can excuse their *un-*  
 “ *charitableness* towards us. And they pay dear for  
 “ the little advantage they get by this argument; for  
 “ they do what in them lies to make themselves no  
 “ christians, that they may prove themselves the truer  
 “ and more christian church; a *medium* which we do  
 “ not desire to make use of.”

I desire our author would view his party’s features  
 in this glass. And let him suggest what he will of me,  
 I bless God I have nothing of this uncharitableness in  
 me. And tho’ I dont think it indifferent, what party  
 a man is of (for he certainly ought to be of that which  
 he believes in his conscience is in the right) yet little  
 stress do I lay upon this in the matter of eternal salva-  
 tion; being fully persuaded, that as in *every nation*, so  
 in every party, *he that fears God, and works righteousness,*  
*is accepted of him.* And I can truly say with the same  
 excellent person: “I had much rather persuade any  
 “ one to be a good man, than to be of any party, or de-  
 “ nomination whatsoever.” And I have made it ap-  
 pear, that my censures of these furious bigots are  
 grounded upon their own declarations, and are far  
 from being uncharitable. So essential do I esteem cha-  
 rity, moderation, and peace to christianity, that I should  
 very much dislike the dissenters, if I saw as little of  
 these among them, as I do among the high church-  
 men. The design of my preaching is many times to  
 recommend these virtues toward those who differ from  
 us, where it can be supposed to be owing to their weak-  
 ness, and they do not by their gross immorality give  
 clear evidence, they deserve not that we should have  
 any favourable opinion of their case. Would to God,  
 such methods of peace were more generally taken by  
 our adversaries.

Further, I am very sensible how much the comfort  
 and happiness of a man’s life depends upon the charity,  
 moderation, and peaceableness of his neighbours; and  
 tho’ I may be defective herein (as who is not?) yet I

am



am very sure my aim and endeavour is to practise these duties toward others, just as I would desire they should towards me. And whenever I have spoken with any severity, I have always kept within the bounds of truth; and the reason of my speaking so has been, partly from an indignation against the evil I was treating of, and partly from a conviction that the men I had to deal with needed to be so dealt with.

He says: *Mr. P. in the Sermon and preface, under consideration, gives too many indications of such an unequal temper*: 'Tis strange then he should not be able to produce them, tho' his professed design is to examine my conduct. I am sure nothing he has hitherto alleg'd is inconsistent with charity, nor has he been able to shew, that I pass any sentence upon men for any thing, but what is universally acknowledg'd to be grossly wicked, and which is notoriously chargeable upon the men I speak of, and accordingly is charged by some of his own church. He adds: *and if the same prevails among his flock, let their conversation be otherwise what it will, they are far enough from being an Epistle of Christ in this behalf. His own rule of success, if allow'd, would give no confirmation to his ministry.* I can tell him, I fear not to appeal to the conversation of my flock, which I believe many of his own party would not care to do. I should be asham'd of them, had they that uncharitableness which I condemn in others; but I bless God 'tis not so. He goes on: *And if immoral practices are the fruits by which false prophets and false teachers may be known, his uncharitable censures and reflections will be apt to intitle him to one of those denominations.* But I hope, not before he is proved guilty of them, which he is not as yet. *To which, says he, may be added his trespasses against veracity.* I let this author know I scorn his charge, and defy him to make it good. I know I am liable to mistake, but falshood I am sure I hate. And as to his grave *admonition* that follows, I would thank him for it, if I were not very sure of its being impertinent. But I am the less surpriz'd at it, because I have so often observ'd it to be the artifice used by his party.

• In my *preface* I said : " 'Tis not easy to think, these men believe themselves, when they assert, we are no christians. I am sure their actions evidently contradict their assertion, and fix upon them the charge of the vilest hypocrisy. 'Tis, I think, a certain truth, and never contested in the protestant world ; that the discipline of the church only extends to the members of it ; and that those who were never in it, are not liable by excommunications to be cast out of it. In former times it used to be alleg'd, that baptism made persons members of the catholic church, and that baptism administred by dissenters made men members of the establish'd church, because that alone was the catholic church in *England*. And so the poor dissenters had it very gravely proved upon them, that they were members of the catholic church of *England*, and liable to her censures, &c. But after we were deliver'd from that oppression, and that occasional doctrine was render'd useles, they plead- ed we never were members of the catholic church. And yet those men, who so earnestly contended we are no christians, have of late been as earnest in striving to bring us into our former bondage to their spiritual courts, and were the contrivers of the first draught of the *Schism Bill*."

This passage he is very angry with, which upon a review I apprehend to be very innocent. But let us hear what he has to say against it.

Now there are, I believe, but few upon whom this fault can be proved : Supposing his belief was the truth, yet it makes nothing against me, but rather confirms what I say. I mention nothing whether they are few or many : and if there are a few, those are the furious bigots I spoke against. But I am persuaded they who are guilty of this fault were many, even all those high churchmen who deny our christianity, and yet shew'd themselves zealous for the *Bill* ; as they did universally, for ought I could ever hear. And of whom it is true, tho' it must be own'd, I think, that they act inconsistently (which men often do thro' ignorance or inadvertency) to charge them peremptorily with the vilest hypocrisy is, surely, to transgress the bounds of charity. If I can clear my

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conduct of all immorality in this passage, 'tis to be hoped I may have a little more favour with my examiner for the time to come. And really, I can't apprehend I have any difficult task to do it, provided I have but equal and impartial judges. Now here, for the clearing myself, I would desire the reader to observe:

1. That I plainly fix the charge of the vilest hypocrisy upon the actions which I mention; and so my reader has the charge no farther insinuated, than as he sees with his own eyes, that the actions themselves will support it.

2. In the censure I pass, I proceed upon such overt-acts as are grossly evil, notoriously injurious to the rights and liberties of mankind, and that carry in them the greatest injustice and oppression. I can never believe that the first draught of that *Bill*, which was all that in prudence I could speak of, was any other. Now I think all mankind allow we may judge men are not sincere, but vilely hypocritical, when they attempt any flagrant wickedness under the cloak of a concern for religion, which is the only rule I have judg'd by.

3. The sentiments and actions which I compare are so utterly inconsistent, that this author himself has not one word to say for the reconciling them, but gives up that matter. So that I charge them with hypocrisy for acting contrary to their own professed principles; when that contrariety was most obvious and apparent, and they could not well be thought to have acted thro' ignorance and inadvertency. And really I question very much, whether the chief managers of that affair will reckon themselves more affronted by me in taxing them with hypocrisy, when they pretended a regard to religion; than by him, in representing them as ignorant and weak enough not to perceive so apparent an inconsistency.

4. 'Tis certain they were men shrewd and sagacious enough, and therefore 'tis but reasonable to suppose, they saw very well what was so obvious; and so the charge lies fairly against them.

5. This charge suits perfectly well with the character of the chief managers of that affair in the rest of their conduct. I hope notorious intemperance and de-



debauchery is a sufficient ground for fixing a charge of hypocrisy upon men, when they pretend they are designing to promote the interest of religion. And tho' it might be hard to denominate men hypocrites from some single action; yet no one thinks it hard to impute hypocrisy in such an evil action to a person, who by the course of his actions has establish'd to himself the character of an hypocrite. And when this is the case, must I not be wonderfully uncharitable in taxing these men with the vilest hypocrisy? If this author had design'd any service to these men, he would have done much more prudently in saying nothing concerning them, unless he could have produced some better plea in their behalf, than their imprudence and inadvertency.

But he has not done with this *paragraph*, and therefore adds: *Mr. P.—'s expression too is observable; in that he says these men earnestly strove to bring the dissenters into their former bondage to their spiritual courts. Now (to pass by the asperity of the word bondage) as long as the dissenters are by the law indulged to absent themselves from our churches, and to worship God publicly in their own way, without being liable to be prosecuted for the same, in any ecclesiastical courts, they cannot certainly be said to be brought into their former bondage to those courts: and the taking away that legal indulgence was not attempted at the time Mr. P. refers to. And therefore the fact, as here charged, is not in any propriety of speech true. Nor will it help Mr. P. to say, that they were attempted to be subjected, in some cases, to those courts; because, in some cases, they have been subject to them all along. As to the word bondage, I declare I am ready to recal it, and beg pardon for my using it, as soon as ever our author will convince me, there is a greater asperity in it, than in the thing to which I apply it. What an unreasonable man is this writer, who cares not that we should speak of things in their proper terms? Had our author felt a tenth part of what some dissenters did, he would not have thought bondage to be too severe a word for the thing. Nor can I see why my expression of bringing us into our former bondage, should be at all scrupled. Our former bon-*

bondage was, our being subjected to the vexation of the spiritual courts for the discharge of our consciences. This we were freed from by the *Toleration Act*, and the first draught of the *Schism Bill* was design'd to expose us again to the vexation of those courts for the discharge of our consciences. Nor could any one suspect I meant any more than this in the general, or that I intended the first draught of the *Schism Bill* design'd to forbid us our public worship. 'Tis a sign a man has a strong inclination to be an examiner of mens conduct, when he will seek for a fault in things so perfectly just and true. My humble request is, that hereafter his own conduct may be a little more *rational and moral*, such charges having indeed little either of reason or civility in them. Nor do I say this for my own sake, who find no difficulty in accounting for my expression; but for the sake of my reader, that I may not by such a wrangling way of writing against me, be constrain'd to use a multitude of words, which I confess is very little to his purpose.

He has yet another fault to find. *In the same paragraph* (says he) *p. 20. Mr. P. calls the doctrine, from which churchmen were wont to infer, that the dissenters are liable to the censures of our church, an occasional doctrine; thereby plainly, but uncharitably, insinuating, that they were time-servers, who taught that doctrine.* Now where is the uncharitableness of that insinuation? Is there no declaration made of mens principles by their actions? 'Tis indeed possible, that a single person may happen to meet with a conviction just in the lucky minute, when his interest will be served by it. And even then the case is so very liable to a suspicion, that a man should not much resent his incurring it; but should rather expect to overcome it, by shewing himself steady to his conviction in the course of his actions. But when a great number of men alter their principles together upon such an occasion; who can help thinking what the cause should be? And when the same sort of men have satisfied the world they were time-servers, in maintaining and relinquishing the doctrines of passive obedience and non resistance, not to mention other instances; they cannot have any

great reason to complain, if they are represented as such in this case, which appears so plain, that this author can neither deny the fact, nor say any thing else by way of apology for it, but that it might be *thro' ignorance or inadvertency*. And therefore when he accuses me of uncharitableness in the suggestion, the reader is to consider this is the sure game our author thinks he may depend upon, when he finds every thing else fail him. And if I thought my examiner would not account it uncharitable in me to guess at his secret reasons, from the manner of his writing; I should be very apt to think that this was the great reason, why he resolved to make such an idle splutter, as he has done, about my *moral conduct*.

I will add, that supposing I had been uncharitable in accusing his friends of the vilest hypocrisy, and time-serving in this case; yet he ought not to have been severe upon me; because he might have reasonably imagined, that I had learnt from a great many writers of his own party to use them thus. He knows very well, that many of them have tax'd the occasional conformists with the vilest hypocrisy and time-serving; altho' there was no such inconsistency in their profest principles and practices, and the practice was not begun when the act of parliament made the receiving the sacrament, according to the church of *England*, a state-test. And tho' I grant an uncharitable accusation will not justify an uncharitable recrimination; yet 'tis not very decent in the aggressors, to be noisy in their complaints of such usage; and that for a reason, which I suppose our author will like the better for its being his own; because this is really *to behave*, as he says, *p. 18. as if the duties of peace and love were incumbent upon their adversaries, and not upon themselves.*

To that passage in my *preface*, which I have now defended, was immediately subjoin'd, *p. 7.* " 'Twould  
 " be happy for us, if they would shew any consistency  
 " and sincerity in their treating us. If they desire to  
 " have us subject to their ecclesiastical courts, let them  
 " own, we are qualified to be so, by being baptized  
 " members of the catholic church: or, if they deny  
 " our baptism and our christianity, let them hearken  
 " to



“ to common sense, and the example of the primitive church, who never pretended thus to exercise discipline, and to censure and excommunicate persons not being of the church, and who scorn’d to receive any part of their maintenance from heathens, heretics, or schismatics. Were it left to me to determine which of these they should chuse, I should certainly prefer the latter. The advantage of which is obvious; and the prejudice I should esteem inconsiderable.”

My censor says: *The fact here, as to the primitive church, is what no man of veracity can assert.* Now supposing the fact were not true, as I related it; yet would it not have been charitable in him to think I, by mistake, took it to be true? Why should not our adversaries be as ready to make such allowances to us, as they insist upon our making to them? And certainly in a matter of antiquity, and such an one too as this, about which he has nothing, or what is little better than nothing, to say against me, a man of his zeal against uncharitableness might have spared my veracity. Let the reader judge, when he has carefully observed how weak and trifling what he says upon this matter is.

*’Tis true indeed,* says he, *that the primitive clergy, before Constantine, received little, and generally none, of their maintenance from any but the members of the church.* This concession will go a great way toward the clearing my veracity. For when I talk of the primitive church, I mean that before *Constantine*. For I look upon the church to have been so corrupted in the fourth century, that I cannot pay much regard to it. Nor am I the only person who shew so little regard to the iv. and following ages, in comparison of the preceding. Particularly he may see, that Dr. *Bennet* has lately in his writing against the nonjurors, p. 17, 18. done the same. And if the primitive clergy of that time generally receiv’d none of their maintenance from any, but the members of their own church; how can he tell their reason was not, because they scorn’d it? Or how can he tell, that I might not have some evidence that was their reason? The reason I have for my saying they scorn’d it, I shall give presently.

sently. I would now fain have our author either own he do's not write with that fairness, that is requisite in such a *censor* and *examiner* as he sets up for, or else produce some evidence of what he would insinuate; that the primitive clergy, before *Constantine*, ever received a *little* of their maintenance from such as I spake of. And here let him not talk of such kindneses, as are only instances of humanity and common civility: but let him prove if he can, that they ever then receiv'd any contributions, as ministers of the christian church, from any but those of their own way. He adds: *But that they never received any thing towards it from others, doth not appear, much less that they scorn'd it.* The best way of proving they did receive any thing towards it, as I have already explain'd it, is to produce some testimony of the antients, and it shall be consider'd, when our author condescends to do it. For my own part, I acknowledge my self perfectly unacquainted with any thing in antiquity of that nature. And now I will acquaint the reader with what I had in my thoughts, when I used the word *scorn'd*, and by that he may judge whether I had not sufficient reason for it. I remember'd the *Apostolical Constitutions*, book IV. chap. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. forbid the receiving any thing from such, nay even so much as an alms for the poor of the church; and say 'tis better to perish, than to receive it of the enemies of God. And heathens, heretics, and schismatics were then reckon'd the enemies of God; as dissenters are by the high churchmen at this day. There is but one case can be objected, and that is; when they had any thing forced upon them, whether they would or not. But in that case the *Constitutions* order it to be turn'd into fewel, that it may be burned; and that because such kind of offerings were evil, tho' not in themselves, yet by reason of the mind of the offerers. And if this is not sufficient to justify my using the term *scorn'd*, I think nothing can be so. I would not be thought from hence to assert the *Constitutions* were written before the IV. century. If they were not, yet all will grant that those of former times were at least as indifferent to a worldly influence; and that therefore 'tis but reasonable to suppose, that

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if those of the iv century scorn'd the receiving their maintenance from the enemies of their religion, they who were before them did so too.

But let us hear what he further alleges here. St. Paul, says he, *I am sure, did not scorn to receive kindnesses from unbelievers, whereof we have more instances than one, Acts xxviii.* 'Tis very common in our dispute to distinguish between the *church in the apostles days*, and the *primitive church*. Thus for instance, Dr. Nichols tells us, *Defence p. 304.* "The *primitive christians*, in veneration of Christ, always receiv'd, [*viz.* "the eucharist] kneeling or standing." And yet he owns, *p. 299.* that *Christ and his apostles* used another posture. This distinction, however unreasonable it may seem, is by use and custom made familiar; and our author might well think I went upon it. If I had design'd to include the scripture times, I should have refer'd to some place of scripture, or have given some hint of the grounds of my opinion. And the truth is, I only refer'd to the primitive church, because our adversaries use so much to vapour in their conformity thereto. For tho' I was satisfied, they did as I said; yet I must needs say, I can't think their rigour and stiffness is to be justified. So that really to bring in the practice of the apostle in this case was not to the purpose, supposing his practice had been ever so contrary to that which I mention'd. But if this be the best instance he can bring concerning the scripture times, it will not signify much with reference to them. There are but three instances in that chapter he can be supposed to refer to. The first is, *v. 2.* *And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one because of the present rain, and because of the cold.* Which shews plainly that this was an instance of common civility and hospitality to poor men in the utmost distress, and not of any particular respect to St. Paul, as a minister, or an apostle. The like is the next instance, *v. 7.* where Publius, *the chief man of the island*, is said to have receiv'd them, and lodg'd them three days courteously. The last instance is not very different, where they, whom the apostle miraculously healed, are said,



v. 10. to have *honoured them with many honours, and faded them, when they departed, with such things as were necessary.* This was not only a piece of civility, but of gratitude likewise, considering the great kindness the apostle had done them in healing them; and whether they remain'd unbelievers, after they had been miraculously healed, is more than our author can tell.

He adds : *And the church received large revenues from the Emperour Constantine, long before he was a baptized member of the church; and such too, as arose out of the possessions of infidels, as well as believers.* Constantine not only profess'd himself a christian long before his baptism, but has likewise been accounted such by writers of our author's side, as well as by the antients. And if *Constantine* must be reckon'd an heathen till his baptism, I would fain know, why the council of *Nice* is ever alleg'd to prove, that the church in his time believ'd it belong'd to christian emperours to call ecclesiastical councils. So that tho' he were not compleatly enter'd into the christian church, he could not be reckon'd an heathen, nor will our author pretend he was an heretic, or schismatic. And so this instance, if it came within the time I intended, would not reach the case I put. Our author's expression is I acknowledge very crafty, when he says they received such revenues from him, *as arose out of the possessions of infidels, as well as believers.* For the design of this seems to be, to insinuate to those who know nothing of the matter, that *Constantine* obliged the infidels to maintain the clergy. Now this I conceive is not true, at least I know of no evidence for it. What he gave them was his own; and tho' it was raised out of the possessions of the infidels, yet it appears not that it was raised for that purpose, or that he might not have applied it to any use he pleased; and therefore these revenues were properly out of his own possessions. So that I cannot imagine what our author means, when he says; *I wonder therefore with what face Mr. P. can talk as he doth:* and all the answer I shall give him is; that he may see by the title page  
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of the *Sermon*, 'tis with a face that is not ashamed to be seen and known.

This being all he thinks fit to say concerning the practice of the primitive church, let us next see, whether he says any thing more to the purpose concerning the equity of the thing it self, in the next paragraph.

Now as to our practice, who are the clergy of the church of England: *What here and there one of us receives now and then of dissenters, by way of present, or free gift, I suppose, doth not trouble Mr. P.* It is too little to give him any concern. *And should we scorn to receive any such thing of any of them, it would be no commendation of our charity.* If he had said, *our humility, or civility, instead of our charity,* I should have perceived his meaning. But what commendation men give of their charity, in receiving gifts from those whose christianity they disown, I cannot imagine; unless he means their charity to themselves; or thinks it a piece of charity to ease the dissenters of their money, which is a sort of charity that the ecclesiastical courts have been famous for, as some other people have been in the late tumults. But let that be as it will, I assure him the gifts of the dissenters to deserving clergymen, be they more or less, (and some of his brethren can tell him their contributions are not little in some places) give me no concern at all. He was not therefore mistaken, when he thought these did not trouble me: tho' perhaps it might trouble him to reconcile their receiving those free gifts, with the account I gave, from the *Constitutions*, of the primitive practice.

But he next proceeds to what he thinks do's trouble me: *And as to our legal dues, especially our tithes, in receiving them of dissenters, we do but receive our own; and are no more beholding to them on that account, than a landlord to a tenant for paying his rent. They are the church's patrimony: and if we count the dissenters to be out of the church, that can be no reason sure, for relinquishing to them part of the patrimony of the Church.* This is no answer to me, who dispute  
not

not whether the law of the land has made these due to the clergy, nor whether the clergy are beholding to the dissenters for paying them : I hinted not any objection against these things. He would therefore have done his cause much more service, if he had shew'd that the tithes were due in equity from the dissenters ; or that there was no injustice in that law, that obliges persons, who dont approve of a particular ministry, to give a tenth part of the product of their land, labour, and cost, to maintain it ; or if he had shew'd that the primitive clergy would not have scorn'd such a law, as should oblige persons who were out of the church to contribute in such a manner to their maintenance.

He adds : *If we count their ministers to be no ministers, that can be no ground for leaving that which is the proper portion of the true ministry to them.* Mr. P. would do well to remember the commandment : Thou shalt not covet.

Hence then it will follow, according to his notion, that if our ministry is the true ministry, the tithes are our proper portion. But I would fain know, how the clergy come to have a right to tithes both from the dissenters and their own members, as their proper portion, even supposing them the true ministry. Our author is very much mistaken in me, if he thinks I desire this maintenance should be settled upon the dissenters; or that I do for my own part covet the tithes. I hope I have more conscience, than to desire ever to be maintain'd by the labour and cost of those, who are enemies to my ministry, and would contribute nothing towards it, if they were not by human laws forced to it. And he had more need himself to remember that commandment ; for if I mistake not, it would teach him another lesson.

In my *preface* I go on thus : “ For tho’ I heartily  
 “ love all sober and moderate men of the establish’d  
 “ communion ; yet I should very little regard the ill  
 “ opinion of the furious generation. For if they only  
 “ are the true church of *England* (as they pretend)  
 “ and the rest are of no church ; I am sure the church  
 “ must be in just such a temper, as bishop *Burnet* speaks  
 “ of



“ of in those remarkable words, which shall conclude this preface.” His words I shall set down, after I have taken notice of my examiner’s censure here upon me.

*And here also I know not how to salve his veracity.* I am very sensible, how readily he would do it, if he could; and as a requital of his kindness, I earnestly request him not to give himself any disturbance; for I can do that which he can’t do for me. *For as by the furious generation, it cannot be supposed he means only those of the nonjuring communion; so in the great body of those, who profess themselves of the establish’d episcopal church, owning the present government, there is no part or generation denying the rest to be of the same church; tho’ some may esteem others too cold and indifferent to the interests of it.* ’Tis amazing to me, that this author should question me about a thing so notorious, and so fresh in every ones memory. It was about the time of Dr. Sacheverel’s trial common everywhere in the mouths of the party; *That low church was no church.* And I think the doctor himself will here salve my veracity, whatever becomes of our author’s.

Thus then he discourses in his *Sermon, p. 37.* of his *Trial*: “ There is another sort of them [*false brethren*] who are for a neutrality in religion, who really are of none, but are a secret sort of reserv’d atheists, who *always pretend to be of the church*, join in the herd, and will sometimes frequent our public communion, as long as the government appears on our side; but if any thing is to be got by it, can with as safe a conscience slide privately into a conventicle, and look as demure as the sleepest saint amongst them. They are equally of all, and of *no communion*, they are the *Gallios*, that care for none of these things; they tell us *they are for the religion establish’d by law, &c.* ”

Again, *p. 42.* “ He that recedes the least tittle from it [*the whole constitution*] to satisfy, or ingratiate with these clamorous, insatiable, and church devouring malignants, knows not what spirit they are of, or he ought to shew who is a true member of our church.

And p. 45. " It would be both for our advantage, as well as their credit, if such men would throw off the mask, intirely quit our church, of *which they are no true members, and not fraudulently eat her bread, and lay wait for her ruin, purloin her revenues, and ungratefully lift up their heels against her.* For then we should be *one fold under one shepherd, &c.*"

" Now if this doctor, who I hope may pass for one of the furious generation, has not said as much as I have done, and as was the common talk not long since, I am much mistaken. 'Tis a little hard by the way, that any dissenters should be charged with uncharitableness or confidence by men, who have such a ringleader among them.

Bishop Burnet's words, which conclude the *preface*, are these : " And I will boldly say this, that if the church of *England*, after she is got out of this storm, [*its danger in king James's reign*] will return to hearken to the peevishness of some sower men", [*in bearing hard upon the dissenters*] " she will be abandon'd both of God and man, and will set both heaven and earth against her."

Now in our author's opinion, these words seem to contain an unworthy reflection on the then past behaviour of the church of *England*, and a terrible prediction in case of her returning to the like. I think the words are a deserved reflection upon the unworthy and cruel behaviour of the church of *England*, in persecuting the dissenters so long and so grievously, as they had done. And Bishop Burnet was not the only man, who then profess'd himself sorry for the ill conduct of the church therein. This was the pretended sense at least of a great many, while they were in danger, expecting *Adonibezek's* fate, however they could afterwards change their note. Nor is there in the bishop's words any other prediction, than of the effect from its proper causes. For as persecution is one of the worst of wickednesses, and consequently most displeasing to God ; so it carries that inhumanity in it, that it may well be expected it should in time be hateful and abominable to men, and render the actors in it so too. Had our author been as  
much

much a friend to moderation, as he pretends, he would not have shew'd himself so displeased with the bishop for this passage.

He says : *The doctor was a fallible man, a severe censor of churchmen, and no prophet.* A prophet he neither in this expression, nor any where else pretended to be. Nor have I seen any *severer* censure he ever past upon churchmen, than they have notoriously deserv'd. 'Tis plain enough the bishop was zealous for episcopacy, and the *English* liturgy ; and 'tis not to be thought he would have spoken so severely, as he has many times, against those of his own side, had he not been fully convinced of the truth of what he said. And this will, with all indifferent persons, go a great way in justifying the dissenters in what they say of them. That the bishop was a *fallible man* is granted ; but that is no argument he might not reflect upon the behaviour of a fallible church. And why should a fallible church be so grievously angry with those who tell her, and that out of love too, that she has been in the wrong. And as far as I can discern, persecution must of necessity have nothing to support it, where infallibility is disclaim'd. For what reason can there be why I should suffer, because my conscience directs me to act otherwise than the church do's, unless the church is a certain and infallible rule for my conscience ? The bishop of *Bangor* tells us : " The church of *England* is founded upon the noble claim of the right of christians to judge for themselves. " And Mr. *Trapp* in the *postscript* to his *Sermon*, p. 37. grants it. Why then should I be persecuted for doing what I have a right to do ? This last author indeed qualifies his concession, for having set down those words of the bishop, thus he answers : " It is so ; and upon another claim to, which " is no less noble : I mean that of a right in herself of " being absolutely obey'd in matters either indifferent " in themselves, or difficult to be understood. Nor " do's this latter claim interfere with the former. " I cannot perceive the truth of this last clause ; because christians may judge those things not to be indifferent



in themselves, or difficult to be understood, which the church determines to be such, injoining an absolute obedience with relation to them. And therefore this latter seems to me to overthrow the former, which is indeed a noble claim. But however I like the bishop's claim, yet I think Mr. *Trapp* had some ground for pretending his other claim also. But they may easily compromise the matter between them thus: The church of *England* is founded upon the bishop's noble claim, in those articles which renounce the infallibility of the church, and which consequently leave christians a right to judge for themselves; but the same church is founded upon Mr. *Trapp's* claim, in all those canons which require such an absolute obedience as he speaks of, and prescribe penalties in default of it; and which injoin men to approve of, and subscribe all her determinations in the difficult points of her articles. Or it may be exprest thus: The church is founded upon the bishop's claim in, her breaking off the papists yoke; and upon Mr. *Trapp's*, in laying their own upon us. 'Tis to be hoped the inconsistency of these two claims will be made so apparent, as that men may come to stick to that only which is a truly noble one.

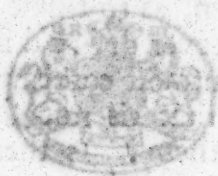
But I return to my examiner, who goes on thus: *And should our church in some cases, after numerous provocations, bear a little hard upon the dissenters, I cannot think she would presently be abandon'd both of God and man, and set both heaven and earth against her.* But what, I beseech him, have these provocations been? If they are numerous, one would think some of them might be easily mention'd. We have neither plunder'd their houses, nor temples. All the provocation that I know of is, that we have patiently born their wrath, and justified ourselves against such as would unreasonably condemn us; and that we have been hearty and zealous for a succession, which has saved us all from ruin, and which they were as much sworn to maintain as ourselves. And are not these, think we, heinous provocations?

Further, how disingenuous is that expression? *Should our church in some cases, after numerous provocations, bear a little hard upon the dissenters; As tho' the thing were*

were yet to do, and the church, kind souls, had never hitherto *born even a little hard* upon us, had always treated us with the utmost kindness and indulgence, and was so far from having any inclination to the least severity, that the utmost provocations have not as yet, and can hardly force her to it. One would think this gentleman never heard of the laws made in the latter end of the last reign, or the fury and rage of his friends in this. I am well satisfied, the great sticklers for those laws in the late reign thought they would bear hard upon the dissenters, or they would not have contrived them. And can a man be so abandon'd of all sense and reason, as to think that when good subjects, who have never deserv'd ill of a government, are treated with the utmost contempt and disgrace, as not fit to be trusted, that 'tis not so much as bearing a little hard upon them? Is there nothing of hardship in depriving men of their natural right, to bring up their children in that religion, which they judge best? Let him put himself in the case of a dissenter, and suppose his children snatch'd away from himself, and that he is forced either to put them under the care of such, as will insil into them a bitterness both against his own religion and person; or else, which is much more eligible, to give them no education at all; and let him then tell me, whether this is not bearing a little hard upon the dissenters. I pass over the rest of their treatment, and go on to that passage with which he closes this chapter.

*'Tis my hope, however (as well as my wish) that she will always comport herself with christian candour and equity towards them, that her true moderation may be known unto all men; but yet with such wisdom and courage, as may, by God's blessing, secure her from the attacks of that furious generation, which there manifestly is among the dissenters, and to which Mr. P. himself, by some features appearing in his writings, and by me observ'd in this and the following chapters, seems to belong. We may easily judge from what I have just now observ'd, what the moderation is, which is the matter of his hope and wish. I pray God we may never experience what it seems to be. And let but that*  
be

be fix'd as the character of a *furious generation*, that they are such as are for persecuting in this world, and damning in the other, all that differ from them, and then that generation must be found among other people than the dissenters. For my own part, I defy him to fix the odious character upon me, who abhor every thing of that nature. And as I have clear'd myself of all his little pitiful reflections upon my conduct hitherto, the reader may expect that I shortly clear myself of the rest, when I vindicate our ordinations, and answer his other two *chapters*. This will soon follow what I now publish, if God gives life and health.



F I N I S.





